ENTERTAINMENT / D1

Acclaimed Fil-Am book 'Dogeaters' to be restaged in Los Angeles

LIVING STARS/ E1

Casa de Amalia: The movie queen says her home is 'relaxed, eclectic, very me'

WORLD / A20

Iraq defers hanging 2 Saddam aides after dictator's bungled execution

NEWS / A2

Janjalani DNA sent to United States for analysis

From yap to growl, device dogs intruders

DA BEST PA RIN SI BANTAY!

BEERSHEBA, ISRAEL—An Israeli firm has designed a security system to ensure jailbreakers or intruders find a watchdog's bark can indeed be worse than its bite.

Harnessing technology that interprets bark-

FROM YAP/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, January 5, 2007 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 28 P18 website: inquirer.net

More endangered fish found on Chinese boat

By Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon
and Norman Bordadora
in Manila

GOVERNMENT INSPECTORS FOUND THIS week more live Napoleon wrasse, an endangered fish species, in the water tanks of the fishing boat of 30 suspected Chinese poachers who

MORE/ A15

'Palace took law into own hands'

VFA director speaks out vs Smith transfer

By Volt Contreras, Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

A MALACAÑANG OFFICIAL REFUSES TO SING ALONG WITH the rest of President Macapagal-Arroyo's men in praise of the Court of Appeals' Wednesday ruling on the custody dispute over a US Marine convicted of raping a Filipino woman.

In fact, Undersecretary Zosimo Paredes yesterday said the executive branch "took the law into its own hands" when it conducted the Dec. 29 operation to remove Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith from the Makati City Jail and transfer him to the US Embassy in Manila.

Paredes, the executive director of the Presidential Commission on the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement (VFACom), said the appellate court was "neither here nor there" when it affirmed the legality of Smith's earlier commitment to the city jail, yet found nothing irregular in his clandestine transfer back to US custody without court approval.

In a phone interview yesterday, Paredes said his position was for the return of Smith to the custody of US authorities in compliance with the VFA, but that he objected to the way the Marine was whisked out of the city jail close to midnight of Dec. 29.

"I am for the return, but it should have been done properly—no coercion, no bullying," said the official, who conceded he was risking his post by being openly critical of both the court ruling and Smith's transfer ahead of a court "authorization."

PALACE TOOK/ A8

BULLIT MARQUEZ/AP

IN-YOUR-FACE: Protesters are not letting up on their demand to return convicted rapist Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith to Philippine custody. They stage another rally at the Mabuhay Rotunda in Quezon City.

Lawyers focus on reversal of rape conviction

By Tarra V. Quismundo and Norman Bordadora

WITH LANCE CPL. DANIEL SMITH HAVING been returned to US custody with the help of Malacañang, his camp's next move is to work for the reversal of his rape conviction—a decision that, barring a presidential pardon, the Philippine judiciary has the sole power to make.

Smith's lawyer Jose Justiniano told the INQUIRER yesterday that the US Marine and his legal team would now concentrate on appealing his Dec. 4 conviction by Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon. The verdict came with a prison sentence of up to 40 years.

"I spoke with him over the phone and I told him that now we will focus on the appeal," Justiniano said on the phone, relating a conversation with Smith on Wednesday afternoon.

Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus, the leader of the Philippine government's "visitorial" team assigned to monitor the 21-year-old Marine's detention at the US Embassy, dropped in on him yesterday and found him in the company of three Filipino preachers.

Corpus said it was the second time a member of the team checked on Smith since its composition was announced at the Department of the Interior and Local Government on Tuesday.

LAWYERS/ A8

ASEAN SUMMIT

All systems go in Cebu, including anti-GMA protests, road repairs

LEFT-WING ACTIVISTS AND GOVernment critics yesterday said they would organize protests denouncing President Macapagal-Arroyo's policies at next week's Asean summit in Cebu City and to test the tight security.

Renato Reyes, secretary general of the left-wing umbrella organization Bayan, said protests planned for the Jan. 10-15 Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit were not meant to embarrass the host government but intended to draw the attention of visiting regional leaders to alleged human rights abuses and political killings in the Philippines.

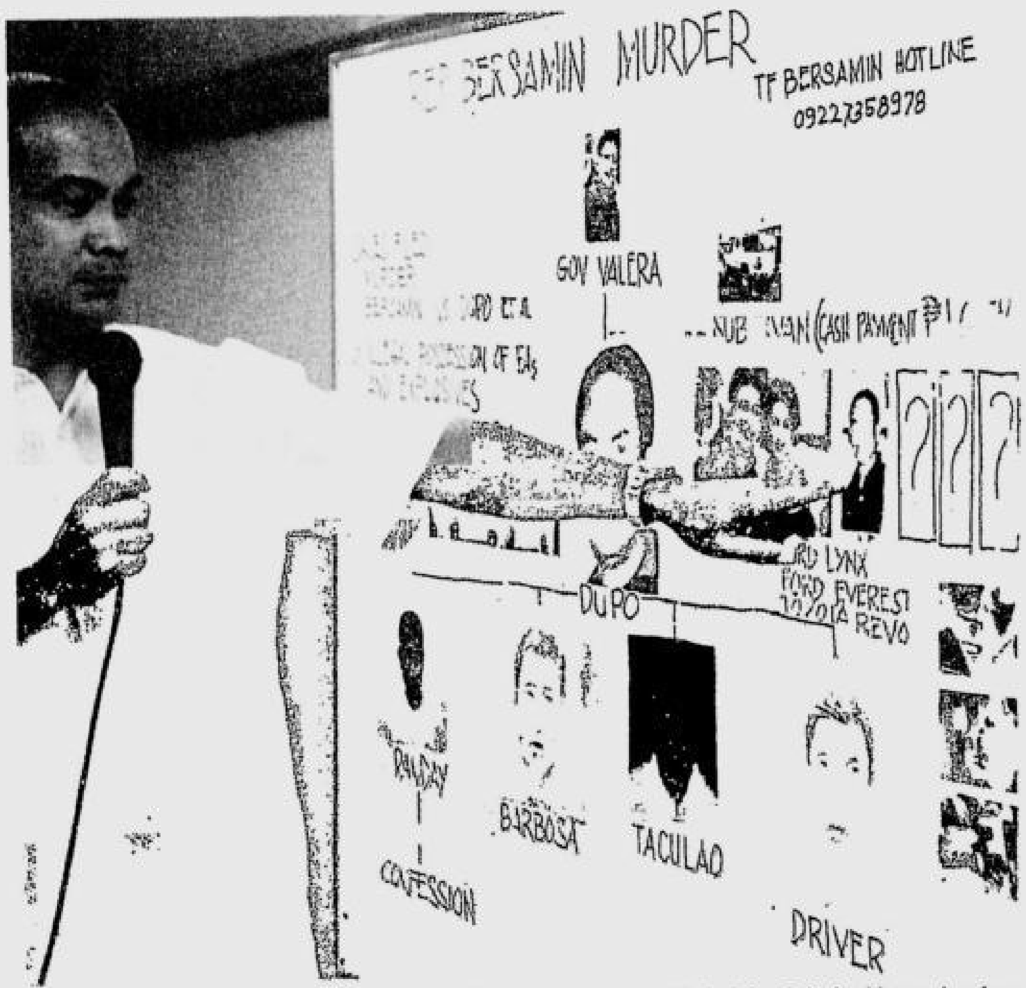
"It is Arroyo's government that makes our country look bad," Reyes said. "We don't see any reason to crack down on rallies and prevent people from marching. That would expose the Philippines as an undemocratic country."

Activists said they were planning peaceful rallies, protests and conferences near the summit venues.

The annual conference hosted

ALL SYSTEMS/ A14

Cops find witnesses disputing gov's story



CRIME/SUSPENSE: Police Director Jesus Versoza, outgoing chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, updates the media on the latest in the Bersamin murder and how the pattern of killings in Abra could possibly be linked to Gov. Vicente Valera. RAFFY LERMA

By DJ Yap

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE INVESTIGAtors have found witnesses who disputed Abra Gov. Vicente Valera's claim that he had not met in the past two years with a key suspect in the murders of Rep. Luis "Chito" Bersamin Jr. and his bodyguard last month.

Valera's pronouncement that he had not seen Freddie Dupo recently was a lie, said Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

"We have information that proves he (Valera) has a propensity to lie and deceive the public," De los Santos said at a press conference at Camp Karingal in Quezon City yesterday.

Employees of a car dealership in Mandaluyong City, where Valera had purchased his Chevrolet Suburban SUV, had positively identified Dupo as one of the persons who was with the governor when he paid for the vehicle last November, De los Santos said.

Three other persons were with Valera, including a woman with a "strong resemblance" to Valera's rumored girlfriend, Hergielyn Dimagiba, when the governor paid for the car, the official said.

Dupo was one of five people who allegedly carried out the Dec. 16 killings of the 62-year-old Bersamin and his police security aide just after the Abra congressman had attended the wedding of his niece at Mt. Carmel Church in Quezon City, according to former Army M/Sgt. Rufino Panday.

COPS/ A8

Lea stages Broadway comeback in 'Les Miz'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Entertainment

FILIPINO SINGER-ACTRESS Lea Salonga is returning to Broadway.

This time she will play the role of Fantine in Cameron Mackintosh's new production of "Les Misérables," a mammoth musical based on the classic by French novelist Victor Hugo.

This was reported in two US-based websites (broadwayworld.com and playbill.com) and was confirmed by Lea herself, who had just arrived in Manila from a Honolulu holiday.

Fourteen years ago, Lea played Eponine in "Les Misérables." In comparison, Fantine is a much bigger role and was played by Uma Thurman in the 1998 movie version directed by Bille August.

A tragic character, Fantine is a factory worker forced into prostitution. She later dies and leaves a young daughter, Cosette, with Jean Valjean.

In the musical, Fantine's role is brief but pivotal. Composers and lyricists Alain Boublil,

INQUIRER PHOTO

SALONGA: First Asian actress to portray Fantine in "Les Misérables," one of the longest running musicals on Broadway.

LEA/ A14

Labor leaders urge Senate to OK ₱125 pay hike

By TJ Burgonio

WHILE THEY FOUND THE CONGRESSMEN'S intent dubious, labor leaders yesterday urged the Senate to pass in toto a House measure proposing a P125 across-the-board wage increase if only to avoid being blamed for its nonpassage in the run-up to the May 14 elections.

At the Senate hearing on the legislated wage hike, the labor leaders argued for the need to approve the measure, which the House passed before its Christmas break after sitting on it for six years, in the face of objections from business leaders.

"In our view, this was passed for the wrong reasons. But just the same we believe that this should be passed because it would benefit the workers," Joshua Mata of the Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) said at the hearing of the committee on labor.

House Bill No. 345 proposes a P125-wage increase over a three-year period, starting with P45 this year, P40 in the second year, and another P40 in the third and final year. The measure has yet to be transmitted to the Senate.

Mata said the increase would boost the "survival of workers."

The National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC) placed the family living wage in Metro Manila as of October last year at P674 a day, about twice the minimum wage of P350 a day.

The NWPC said the family living wage in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

LABOR/ A14

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northeastern Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with rains. Visayas and Mindanao will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the eastern sections. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with light rainshowers.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/01/04/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Rains

Second FRONT PAGE
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JOINT RP-US UNDERTAKING

Janjalani DNA sent to US for test

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE YESTERDAY said the analysis of DNA from remains believed to be that of Abu Sayyaf group leader Khaddafy Janjalani will be a "joint" undertaking between the Philippines and the United States.

PNP Director General Oscar Calderon said the US interest in having the remains identified was natural since some of Janjalani's victims had been Americans.

"It will be a joint investigation because the US has an interest here. The kidnappings staged by the [Abu Sayyaf] in the past also involved US citizens," Calderon said.

He also said having the DNA analysis done in the US was "faster" and "more scientific."

"But this is not to say we don't have the capabilities here. We have the facilities," he added.

PNP Crime Laboratory head Chief Supt. Arturo Cacdac said the DNA analysis "will be conducted in the US," confirming an earlier INQUIRER story.

Janjalani's brother

Cacdac also said the PNP already had comparative samples for the DNA analysis. But he declined to reveal what the samples were or if they had been taken from Janjalani's brother, Hector, who is incarcerated at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City.

The INQUIRER reported last week that two PNP crime lab officers and two members of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) managed to take the samples.

Cacdac said the results would be available in two weeks.

He also said the PNP Crime Lab had recommended sending one of its DNA experts, Senior Insp. Lorna Santos, to the US to join the testing team. "We are just waiting for the paperwork."

"As soon as the tests are completed, we will make the results available to the public," Cacdac said.

On Dec. 27, 2006, Filipino Marines unearthed a body believed to be that of Janjalani, the leader of the notorious Abu Sayyaf, in a remote area in Barangay Kabuntakas, Patikul, Sulu.

Two Abu Sayyaf members who had turned themselves in to the authorities led the Marines to the spot. They claimed Janjalani was fatally wounded in an encounter with government forces in September last year.

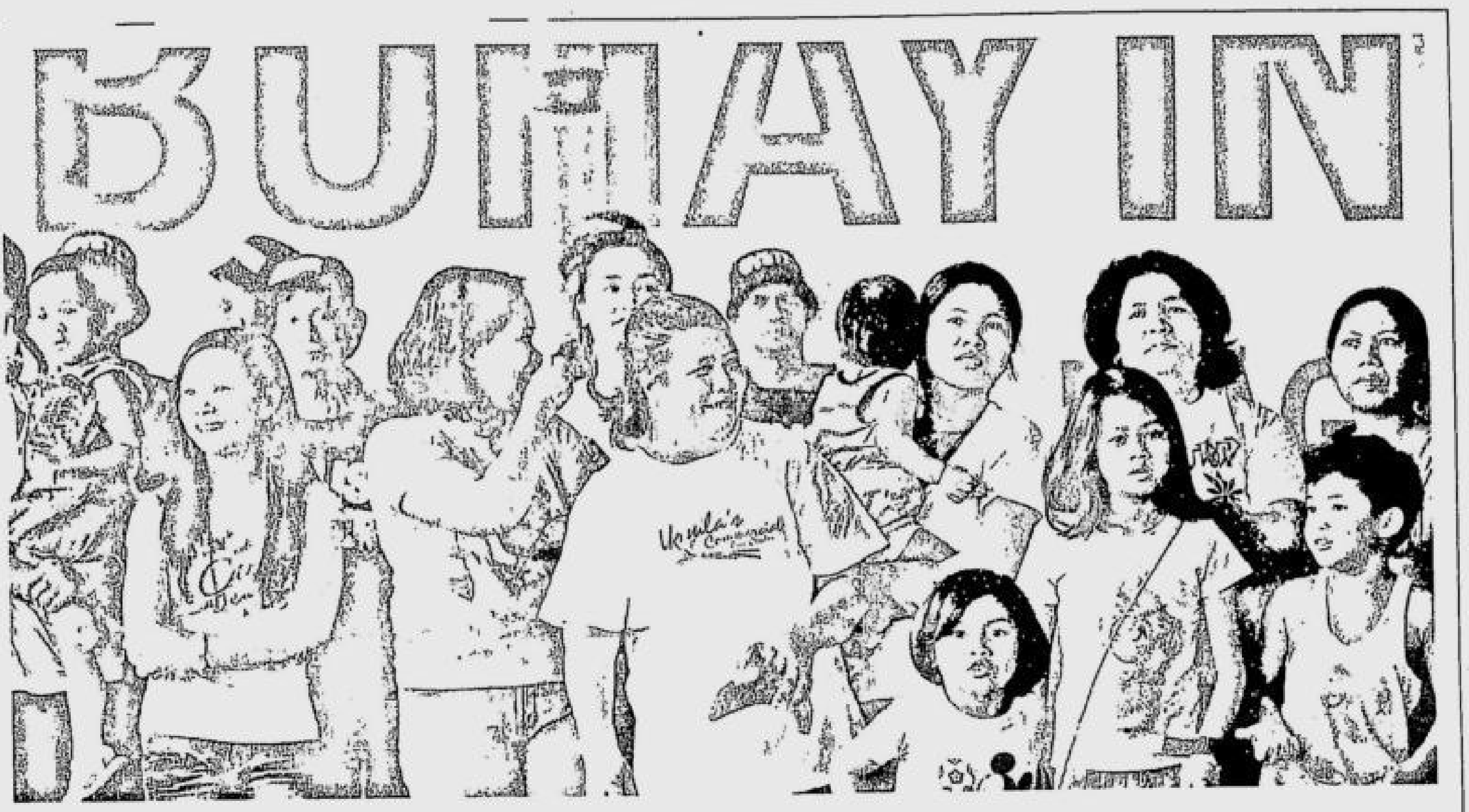
$5-M bounty

Janjalani had a $5-million price on his head. He took over the reins of the Abu Sayyaf after his older brother, Abdujarak, was killed in a firefight with police in Basilan on Dec. 18, 1998.

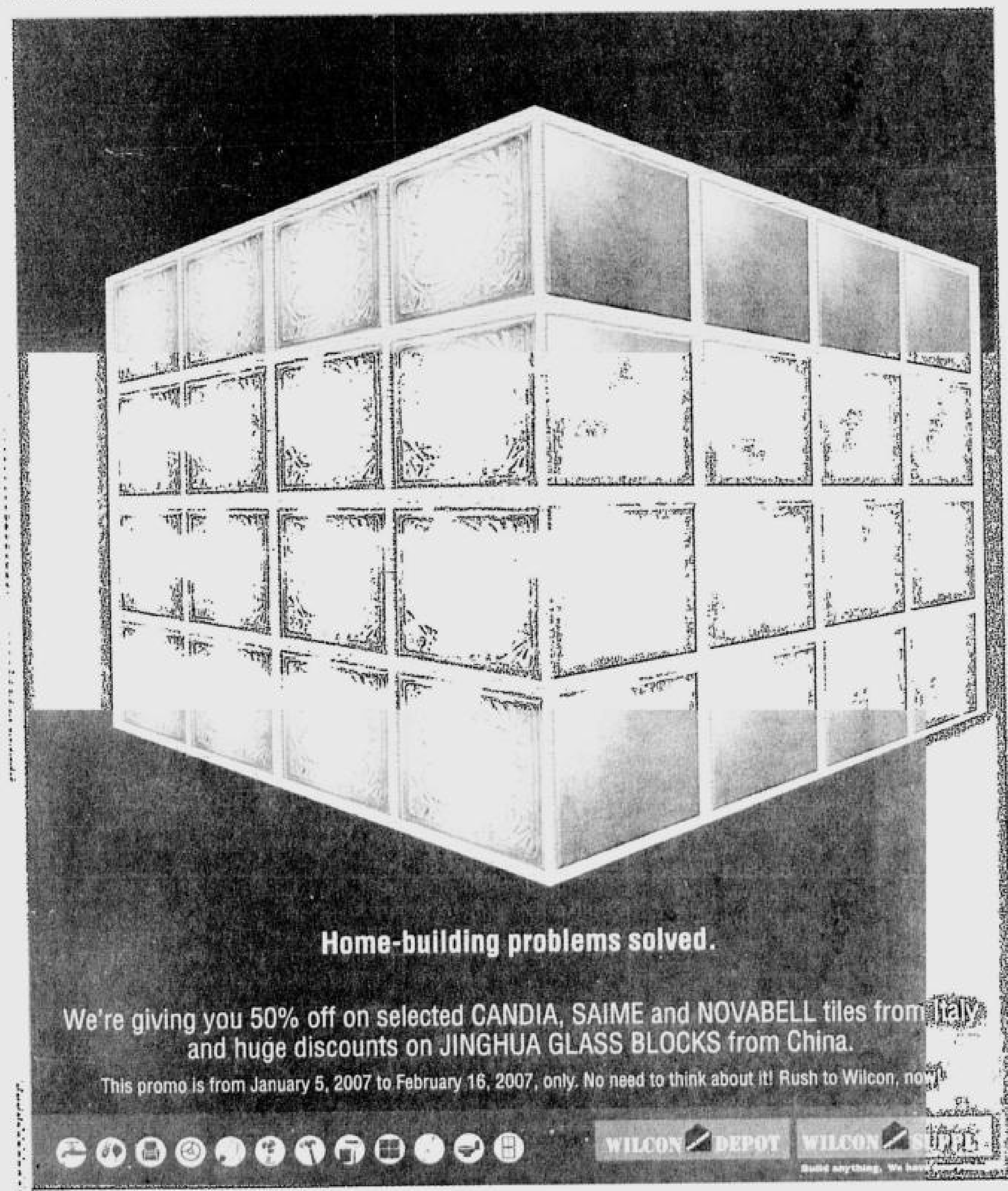
Officials have said the two former Abu Sayyaf members might get the reward money.

The Abu Sayyaf gained notoriety in the '90s for a spree of kidnappings, particularly of foreign tourists. Among their more prominent victims were American missionary-couple Martin and Gracia Burnham.

It was around this time, it was believed, that the Abu Sayyaf established links with the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror group, which in turn had ties to the al-Qaida international terror network headed by Osama bin Laden.



WAITING FOR GLORIA
Residents of Barangay 830 in Nagtahan await the arrival of their best-known neighbor, who took a walking tour of the communities around Malacañang yesterday. President Macapagal-Arroyo interacted with barangay residents and officials on several issues, including employment, potable water, peace and order and drainage. She also greeted students of the Philippine Insitute of the Deaf (right photo).
LYN RILLON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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0024, Series of 2007

BIR misses mark, but hits own target

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE missed the tax-collection target set by the national government for 2006, posting a P31-billion shortfall, because of factors which it claimed were "beyond its control."

The BIR yesterday reported that it collected P644.4 billion in taxes in 2006, against the P675.4 billion official target set by the interagency Development Budget and Coordination Committee (DBCC), the agency tasked with setting economic policies and targets for the national government.

In 2002, the BIR recorded a shortfall of P53 billion.

But the BIR sets its own internal collection target and does not subscribe to the goal set by the national government.

According to the BIR's own target, its P644.4-billion collection in 2006 was P8 billion higher than the goal it had set for itself.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag yesterday claimed that the agency had exceeded its actual collection target for 2006 by P10 billion, which he said was the highest collection target and the highest collection ever made in the bureau's 102-year history.

Disparity

Buñag said the total taxes collected derived solely from BIR operations reached P611 billion, P10 billion more than the bureau's so-called actual target of P601.4 billion.

The apparent disparity in figures is because Buñag maintains that the expected collection from taxes on income from investments in government securities should not be part of the BIR's revenue-collection goal.

This is because the BIR has no control over the amount of government securities that the national government, through the Bureau of the Treasury, will issue.

Last year, the Btr canceled some auctions for government securities due to the government's declining need for borrowings, which in turn is due to its improving fiscal condition, Buñag noted.

Government securities, including Treasury bills and Treasury bonds, are debt instruments issued by the government. Those who purchase T-bills and bonds, which carry interest, serve as lenders to the government and are paid back upon maturity of the debt instruments.

The P675 billion official target covered documentary stamp taxes from the sale of Treasury bills and bonds amounting to P49 billion which the Btr was not able to realize.

Buñag said the BIR's inability to meet the target of P675.4 billion set by the DBCC was largely due to external factors, and so the tax agency should not be held accountable for it.

Critics have pointed to the inefficiency in tax collection and corruption as the reasons behind the BIR's chronic shortfalls.

Buñag, however, blames the decline in interest rates and the fall in domestic oil production, aside from the lower-than-expected volume of government securities issued, as other factors affecting the BIR's collection performance.

The decline in interest rate adversely affected the BIR's collection of taxes on income from bank deposits, while lower oil production cut the collection of taxes on oil, he said.

Biggest contributor

The BIR is the biggest revenue contributor to the national government among the line agencies, accounting for roughly 60 percent of national government revenues.

Despite the failure to meet the national government's tax collection target, the government is still expected to have reduced its budget deficit for 2006 to an amount much lower than the target.

The national government has set a target of reducing the budget deficit from P146.8 billion in 2005 to only P125 billion in 2006.

But the Department of Finance said the deficit for 2006 likely settled anywhere between P80 billion and P90 billion. The DOF will report the 2006 budget deficit sometime next week.

The expected posting of a much lower budget deficit in 2006, despite the shortfall in tax collection, has been achieved largely through tight spending.

The government was forced to tighten expenditures for 2006 because of the failure of Congress to pass the proposed P1.053-trillion national budget ceiling.

The non-passage of the 2006 budget forced government to operate using the 2005 budget ceiling, which was about P100 billion lower.

With a report from Cynthia D. Balana

'POLITICS IS LOCAL'

Puno sees win for admin bets

By Norman Bordadora

INTERIOR SECRETARY RONALdo Puno, reputed to be a political strategist for President Macapagal-Arroyo, has predicted a good year for the administration politically.

In an interview, Puno dismissed claims of a resurgent opposition because of the supposed public outrage at the ruling coalition's abuse of its majority in the House of Representatives.

Ms Arroyo's allies in the House have been criticized for using their numbers to dismiss a second impeachment case against the President and for attempting to force a constituent assembly to change the Charter without Senate participation.

"The mid-term elections will basically be local. It will be about performance and delivery of services and not about which way politicians positioned themselves with regard to national issues," said Puno.

As for the administration's supposed lack of members capable of being tapped for the Senate, Puno said it won't matter much when the campaign starts and the administration's machinery takes over.

"The national candidates will have to depend on the local candidates, especially in a mid-term elections. Sample ballots distributed in the local level usually carry just about three names of senatorial candidates," he said.

When it comes to securing the support of local officials, Puno said the administration has an edge, with almost all provincial governors supporting Ms Arroyo and her allies.

"Except for perhaps three, we have all the governors in our fold. We also have most of the mayors," he said.

Puno said the opposition's bid to gain the majority in the House of Representatives and mount a more successful impeachment bid against the President would fail as opposition incumbents are outperformed by the administration representatives.

"The congressional elections will also be about what projects and services were delivered to their respective constituencies," he added.

Puno said the opposition's ranks in the House is also expected to dwindle further as three-term congressmen like Minority Leader Francis Escudero and Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano seek election to the Senate.

ABC
NBN
ABS CBN
NEWS

PUNO OPTIMISTIC. Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno in an ambush interview during yesterday's New Year call at Camp Crame. JOAN BONDOC

PNP girds for polls, vows all-out drive vs armed groups

By Alcuin Papa

WITH ELECTION-RELATED VIOlence already beginning, the Philippine National Police (PNP) announced yesterday the formation of Task Force HOPE (Honest, Orderly, Peaceful Elections) to "go all out" against some 90 private armed groups.

PNP Chief Director General Oscar Calderon told reporters in Camp Crame yesterday that the campaign against private armies is part of the PNP preparations for the coming May polls.

Calderon said they expect the local and mid-term elections to be violent, and have "planned for the worst scenario."

Task Force HOPE was formed in December, just days after Abra's congressman Luis Bersamin was gunned down last in front of the Mt. Carmel Church in New Manila, Quezon City.

Deputy Director General Avelino Razon, deputy chief for administration, revealed that based on their reports last year, there are a total of 92 armed groups in the country, with 56 located in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) alone.

Razon also said they have already "neutralized" a total of 25 groups: five in Region 1, four in Region 2, four in Region 3, one in Region 5, three in Region 6, two in Region 8, and six in the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR), where the province of Abra is located.

"It's not that we are doing this just now. We have conducted operations ever since but we have intensified our operations now that the elections are near," Razon clarified.

Razon said police have not been able to establish a link between the armed groups and politicians. Most of the armed groups, he claimed, were "more involved in criminal activities."

But he said they would continue to monitor these groups because they could be used by unscrupulous politicians," Razon said.

"We are expecting (violence) since this is a local election... this is a hotly contested election," added PNP Director for Operations Wilfredo Garcia.

He explained that the Task Force has been divided and assigned to pre-election, election day, and post-election periods.

Garcia said that for the pre-election period, police would set up checkpoints, implement the firearms ban and disarm private armed groups.

During the election day itself, police will be responsible for securing polling precincts, Garcia added.

After the elections, police would continue implementing security measures "in case there is need for a recount," Garcia explained.

Comelec paves way for another round of people's initiative

By Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECtions has paved the way for the possible holding of another round of the administration-backed "people's initiative" or signature campaign to amend the Constitution, and possibly a plebiscite to be held at the same time as mid-term elections in May.

The Comelec released yesterday revised rules or supplementary guidelines on the conduct of such an initiative and a subsequent plebiscite. The guidelines were published in two dailies, as required by law, and will take effect Jan. 10.

The new Comelec Resolution (No. 7796) provides the missing implementing guidelines for Republic Act No. 6735 or the Initiative and Referendum Act of 1989.It specifies the forms needed for an initiative petition, the process of certification and verification of the required number of signatories.

Last October, the Supreme Court junked the administration's signature campaign as a "grand deception" but upheld RA 6735 and Comelec Resolution 2300 as sufficient basis for the conduct of a people's initiative and plebiscite to amend the Constitution.

The Commissioners began deliberating on the "supplemental guidelines" a few days before Christmas.

"It's essentially a fine-tuning" of Resolution 2300 which was adopted by Comelec in 1991, explained Commissioner Rene Sarmiento in a phone interview.

But critics denounced Comelec for "conspiring" with Malacanang to expedite the initiative guidelines so that the Charter change plebiscite could be held before or simultaneously with the May 14 polls.

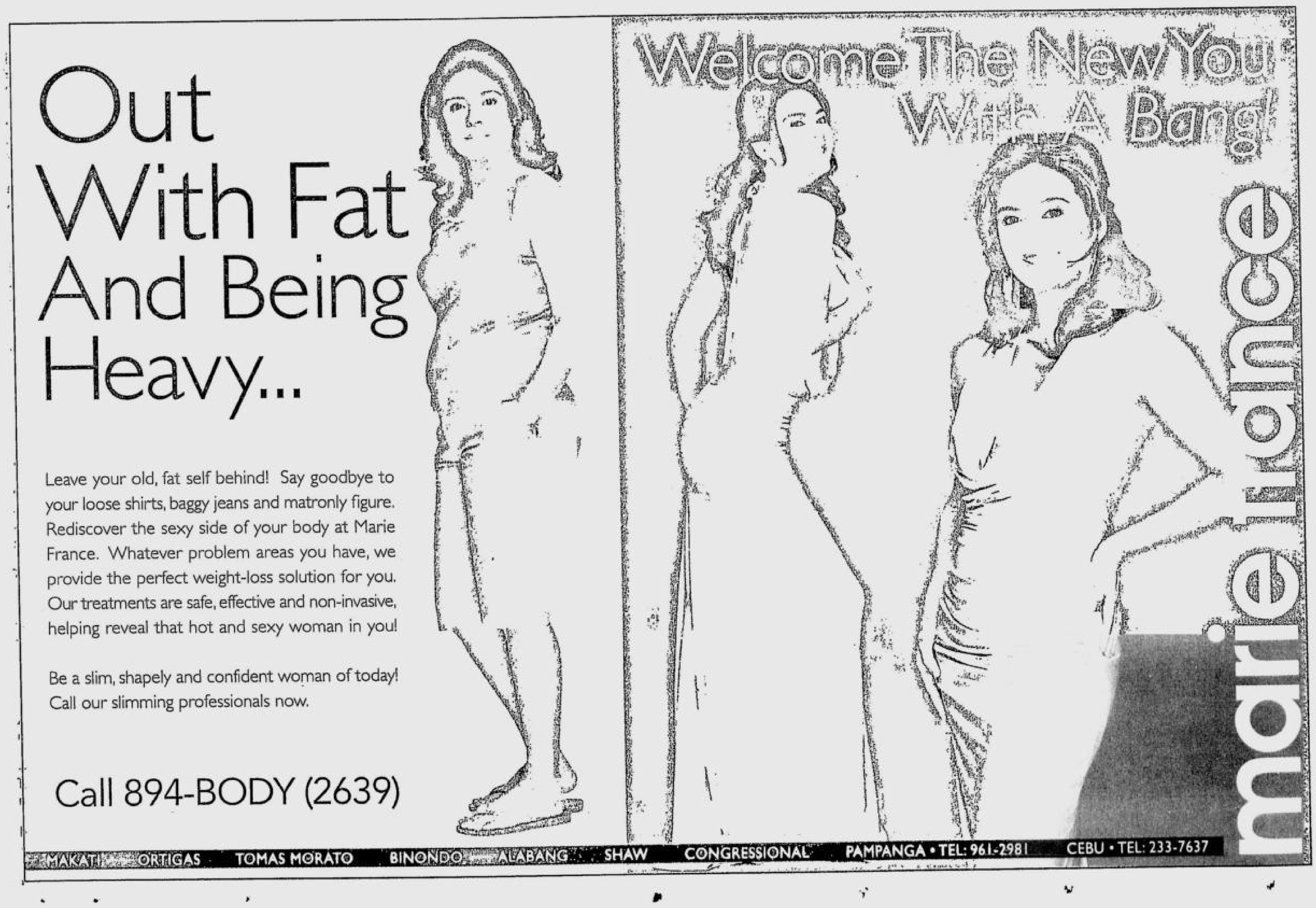
Comelec education and information director James Arthur Jimenez said the new resolution would ensure that the agency would not be caught "flat-footed" when another group decides to file another Charter change initiative.

There have been reports that Sigaw and Ulap were planning to revive the people's initiative and hold the plebiscite simultaneously with the May 14 elections.

Sarmiento, however, said he has "reservations and feelings of apprehension" should a new initiative petition for Charter change be filed again before Comelec.

"The process may have to be rushed and I think the time factor is important here, considering that the May 14 elections is so close; I think there will be time constraints," he added.

But Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. had earlier said there would be no problem. The Comelec could print the plebiscite questions on the ballot to be used for the May mid-term election, Abalos assured.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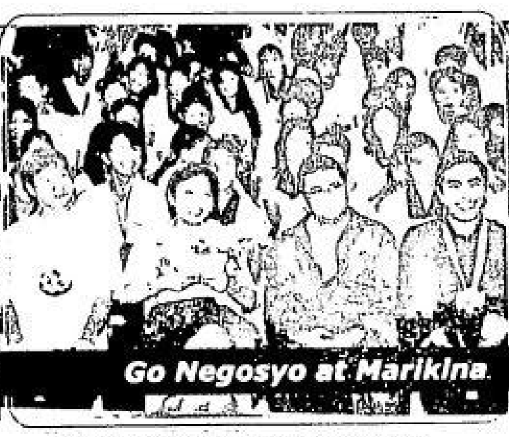
Go Negosyo at Marikina

The Entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in Marikina. Here with Joey Concepcion and Mayor Fernando.

Go Negosyo goes to Rotary

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The Entrepreneurship Revolution

2006 has seen many changes in the entrepreneurship landscape. In our own small way, Go Negosyo is glad to have witnessed and enabled these changes. Thanks to the support and guidance of self-made Filipino entrepreneurs and companies, the Government, and the banking sector, more and more Filipinos have ventured into setting up their own businesses.

Special mention go out to the Go Negosyo Panelists and Mentors who have generously devoted their time, talent and know-how to thousands of would-be entrepreneurs. Without a doubt, their passion, valuable advice and mentoring have created such an impact not only to those who seek their counsel but also to the Entrepreneuship Revolution.

To the Go Negosyo Mentors, our deepest thanks! Let's keep the fire burning!

> *"Teach a nation how to fish, and you feed the nation many lifetimes."*
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Noli to US Filipinos: Keep dollars coming

By Cynthia D. Balana

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO yesterday said the Philippines would soon become the next success story in Asia if overseas Filipinos would continue to keep their money flowing into the country.

De Castro made the assurance in a speech before some 100 leaders of the Philippine community in Washington DC where he attended the state funeral services for the late US President Gerald Ford on Tuesday as the personal representative of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"There are many investment opportunities in the Philippines right now. Those of you who have the funds, or have control over funds, may wish to consider placing your money in our country. Even small contributions will mean a lot to poor families in the Philippines," he said.

De Castro said the healthier business climate, supported by inflows from overseas Filipinos, has created a sustained appreciation in the peso.

The meeting was held at the Philippine embassy and was attended by Filipino employees of the International Monetary Fund, representatives of the Philippine-American Foundation for Charities and Feed the Hungry Inc., Citibank Filipino Employees Association, Alpha Travel, US Agency for International Development, Montgomery County Phil-Am Association, Filipino Veterans Group, Ilocano Society of America, MABUHAY, International Finance Corporation Filipino Employees Association, Suntrust Bank Filipino Group, De La Salle Alumni Association, and Filipino graduate students.

In his speech, De Castro said that investments from overseas Filipino workers and dual citizens were vital to the country's bid to prosper.

"Perhaps, one of the most encouraging photos of 2006 is the one which was featured in the year-end issue of a local paper," the Vice President said. "The picture shows our stock market traders, hands raised high and jubilant over the market's performance at the end of the year."

Right course

The Vice President said that at present, the Philippines is in the right course towards development, citing controlled budget deficit, increased tax collection and the revival of investors' confidence in the country.

As a result, he said, interest rates were going down, the exchange rate was improving, with the peso getting stronger than ever, while inflation was under control.

De Castro also said the government would embark on a major infrastructure program in the next few years to improve the competitive advantage of super-regions: agriculture in North Luzon and Mindanao, tourism in Central Philippines, trade and industry in Metro Manila and the Urban Luzon Beltway, and technology at the Cyber Corridor.

As chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), he said, the national housing program has already sheltered almost 30,000 railway families.

In addition, the government has successfully created a policy environment conducive to housing investments, he said.

De Castro likewise cited the deliberate effort to reduce interest rates for housing loans to make home ownership more affordable.

"Some may say it is distorting the market structure—but who benefits from the market forces? As long as we are carefully targeting our clientele and we are not directly competing with the market of the private sector, I do not see any distortion there. What we are doing is to implement a targeted subsidy scheme," he said.

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24,000 Pinoys now have dual RP citizenship

SINCE THE DUAL CITIZENSHIP LAW WAS passed three years ago, nearly 24,000 former Filipinos have reacquired their Philippine citizenship, according to the Bureau of Immigration.

As of Jan. 2, 2007, a total of 23,946 applications for dual citizenship had been approved, Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said yesterday.

These successful applicants could now enjoy their rights and privileges as Filipinos, Fernandez said.

The bureau receives an average of 10 to 20 applications for dual citizenship per day, according to Arvin Santos, head of the BI task force on dual citizenship.

The dual citizenship law was passed in 2003 but was only implemented in 2004 after the BI was tasked as lead agency for its implementation.

Under the said law, former natural-born Filipinos who became naturalized citizens of other countries could apply for Philippine citizenship.

The law was enacted to encourage former Filipinos living in other countries to return here and invest or buy property, the BI said.

The number of applications surged in October 2005, Santos said, when the bureau decided to relax the requirements for dual citizenship.

Under the new rules, applicants are no longer required to submit their National Statistics Office-authenticated birth certificates. Instead, they can submit their birth certificates from the local civil registrar in their birthplace or other documents proving that they were natural-born Filipinos, like a Philippine passport, a voter's affidavit or a marriage contract.

Fernandez earlier said he decided to ease the rules for reacquiring Philippine citizenship after receiving complaints from applicants who said they could not meet certain documentary requirements like their NSO-authenticated birth certificates. *Leila B. Salaverria*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, January 5, 2007
Before Epiphany
Bl. John Neumann

1st Reading: 1 Jn 3:11-21
Gospel: John 1:43-51

Jesus decided to set off for Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one that Moses wrote about in the Law, and the prophets as well: He is Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

Nathanael replied, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming, he said of him, "Here comes an Israelite, a true one; there is nothing false in him." Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?" And Jesus said to him, "Before Philip called you, you were under the fig tree and I saw you."

Nathanael answered, "Master, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" But Jesus replied, "You believe because I said: 'I saw you under the fig tree.' But you will see greater things than that.

Truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

Commentary

We must make choices: Between doing good or evil; between loving others or killing them, refusing to share what we have with them, hating them. We must love in truth and in deed, remembering that God knows everything. We are either Cain or Abel, killing or doing justice.

Each person meets/sees Jesus and thinks s/he knows him: as the one Moses spoke about in the law and prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph of Nazareth, the Son of God (a prophet), the king of Israel. But Jesus tells us at the very beginning that we must come to know him as the Son of Man, worshipped by the angels, coming out of heaven. Who do we think Jesus is? Who must we learn to see and worship this year?

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2 rebel officers 'mentally' tortured, wives claim

THE WIVES OF TWO REBEL JUNIOR officers have claimed their husbands are being "mentally tortured" by the Army since their capture six months ago.

Army 1st Lt. Sonny Sarmiento and 2nd Lt. Aldrin Baldonado have been kept in "*bartolina*" (solitary confinement) at the maximum-security compound of the Intelligence Security Group (ISG) at Fort Bonifacio since July 27, their wives said.

They said the two officers were not being adequately fed, and deprived of reading materials and personal grooming items like combs.

Sarmiento and Baldonado are among the 97 junior officers, who styled themselves as the Magdalo group, undergoing court-martial for allegedly participating in the July 2003 failed coup, also known as the Oakwood mutiny.

The Army has denied it was keeping Sarmiento and Baldonado in solitary confinement.

But it refused to allow a team from the Commission on Human Rights to inspect the detention facilities for the two officers last Dec. 28.

'Treated well'

Army spokesperson Maj. Ernesto Torres denied that the two officers were in solitary confinement or being tortured in any way.

"They are not in solitary confinement. They are being treated well, according to their rights," he said.

In an interview, Venus Sarmiento and Wilma Baldonado said they were afraid their husbands would soon lose their minds under such conditions.

"We just want them taken out of ISG. They don't see anyone, they can't talk to anyone. It's mental torture," said Wilma Baldonado who is based in General Santos City and was only able to come to Manila three weeks ago with her two young children.

"We are not asking for special treatment. We just ask for what is humane. They might go crazy there," said Venus Sarmiento who lives in Bulacan.

Sarmiento escaped from detention in Fort Bonifacio on Jan. 17, 2006, along with 1st Lieutenants Lawrence San Juan, Nathaniel Rabonza and Patricio Bumidang Jr.

Sarmiento, Rabonza and Bumidang were recaptured at a Quezon City safe house last July.

With them were Baldonado, Army 2nd Lt. Angelbert Gay and Navy Lt. Kiram Sadava.

San Juan was captured earlier on Feb. 21, 2006 in Batangas.

Military officials claimed the group at the safe house was planning to stage an attack during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address before Congress last July 24, 2006. They said they found explosives, firearms and a blueprint of the Batasan Complex in the safehouse.

Since their capture, some of the rebel officers have turned state witness, except for Baldonado and Sarmiento who remain in solitary confinement.

Solitary confinement

Sources said the Magdalo rebel officers were forced into signing a prepared affidavit that would name their alleged coddlers while they were on the run.

Baldonado and Sarmiento reportedly resisted implicating anyone, particularly opposition figures for their escape, according to the sources.

"They are afraid for their family's safety because the people they are forced to implicate could get back at them," said one source.

Their wives claimed Baldonado and Sarmiento were being separately kept in small cells with a single window, a bed, toilet and a single dim bulb providing illumination.

They are not allowed to leave their cells except for half an hour a day to sun themselves in a small terrace with bars.

They do not see any other person except the guard accompanying them.

The two officers are allowed to see visitors during weekends for half an hour. On the way to and from the visitors' room, the two are blindfolded and handcuffed, their wives said.

Venus Sarmiento said her husband looked "thin, pale, and very weak" when she last visited him.

Wilma Baldonado described her husband as "*buto't balat* (all skin and bones)."

During one visit, Baldonado's three-year-old son reportedly rushed into the room and was shocked to see his father handcuffed and blindfolded.

The wives said they were denied entry to the compound during Christmas Day because the camp was on "red alert."

Another rebel Army junior officer is reportedly also being kept in solitary confinement at the ISG compound.

Capt. Dante Langkit has reportedly been in solitary confinement since his arrest last April for alleged participation in the Feb. 24 failed coup plot.

He is the only one of the 30 officers undergoing court-martial for the coup plot who has not been transferred to the detention facility in Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

The Army did not give any reason why Langkit has not been transferred to Camp Capinpin.

Sources said Langkit was also being forced to turn into "state witness."

Palace suspends labor arbiter

MALACAÑANG HAS SUSPENDED FOR one month and one day a top official of the National Labor Relations Council for failing to submit a statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN).

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita signed the resolution endorsing the recommendation of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission to suspend Labor Arbiter Henry D. Isorena for violating section 8 of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees and section 7 of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

"All public officials are mandated to submit their SALN every year. They should not rely nor blame their administrative staff for failure to remind them of their obligation," said PAGC chair Constancia de Guzman.

The PAGC was investigating Isorena for ill-gotten wealth raised by a complainant and they found that Isorena did not file his SALN in 2002.

Isorena's assets consisted of two parcels of land in Bulacan, a Delica passenger van, 1977 Mitsubishi Galant and a Honda City.

Isorena blamed his sickness, work overload and his office for his failure to file the SALN.

But De Guzman said that people who were monitoring SALN applications were not obliged to remind public officers of their duty to file this document.

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Manila, January 05, 2007.

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PCGG wants all proceeds of PTIC

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON Good Government yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court to order the Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp. (PTIC) to remit to the government all accumulated and unpaid dividends due to it since 1986.

The shares of PTIC, at one time the biggest shareholder in the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), passed into government hands after the Supreme Court last year declared them part of the ill-gotten assets of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

In a statement issued yesterday, the PCGG said it had asked the Sandiganbayan to order the PTIC "to account all cash and stock dividends declared and/or issued by PLDT in favor of PTIC from 1986 to the present time, corresponding to 111,415 shares of stock in Prime Holdings Corp. (PHC) that was declared by the Supreme Court in favor of the government."

It said that "the Republic of the Philippines, having been adjudged by final judgment as the rightful owner of the subject shares of stock, is unquestionably entitled to the accumulated dividends" from the shares pertaining to the same shares."

A senior PCGG official said the accumulated cash dividends—not including all stock dividends declared by PLDT—would be worth "at least P1.3 billion."

"This does not yet include dividends the company declared in 2006 and 2007," the official said, requesting anonymity because of ongoing negotiations to privatize the very same shares of PTIC stock.

All told, the unpaid cash and stock dividends due the government since the company was sequestered may reach P5 billion, according to PCGG estimates.

The block of PTIC shares, issued in the name of Prime Holdings Inc. (PHI), constitutes about 6.4 percent of PLDT and is valued at between P21 and 29 billion. PHI owns a 46-percent stake in PTIC.

The PCGG, which sequestered the shares after the 1986 Edsa People Power revolution, won control of them after a 20-year, four-way litigation between the government, the Marcos heirs and the Cojuangco and Yuchengco families.

The case uncovered a complicated layer of holding companies that included the PTIC and the PHI, designed to conceal the true ownership of PLDT.

The PCGG said the 111,415 shares have already been transferred in the name of the Republic of the Philippines, in accordance with the SC's December 2006 decision, a writ of execution, and issuance of a PTIC stock certificate No. 044 in favor of the government on Dec. 19, 2004.

The PCGG move to collect the accumulated dividends provides a new twist to the unfolding controversy surrounding the planned sale of the PTIC shares, a transaction that has been denounced by opposition politicians claiming that the shares were being sold at a discount.

Peso closes stronger

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO CLOSED STRONGER YESTERDAY at 48.83 against the US dollar from Wednesday's 48.88 but traders see the currency succumbing to some profit-taking amid strong overseas Filipino workers' remittances.

The peso, now trading at nearly six-year highs, managed to eke out more gains against the dollar yesterday despite an upbeat factory survey that shored up confidence in the US economy.

"The US dollar is now oversold. I think the (peso) rally is now overextended but because there's a thin corporate demand for dollars, it's still gaining," said Marcelo Ayes, senior vice president of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. "The market will likely trade in a tight range."

Ayes said the peso could peak at 48.50 to 48.75 to the dollar over the short-term before correcting back to the 49.00 to 49.20 level.

But despite traders' expectation that the holiday inflows from OFWs will soon dry up, the peso is seen getting sustained support from foreign funds trooping to the local stock market.

"The peso's steep increase over the past several months has generally been attributed to market forces. After all, the dollar has been taking a beating against major currencies resulting in appreciating local currencies across the region," said a yearend review by local consultancy firm Lazaro Bernardo Tiu & Associates.

GMA leaving for Switzerland, Kuwait soon

By Christine O. Avendano

THE NEW YEAR HAS JUST BEGAN, AND President Macapagal Arroyo is going off again for yet another foreign trip, this time in Switzerland and Kuwait before the end of the month.

According to the Palace schedule being prepared for her visits, President Arroyo will be in Switzerland from Jan. 25-27 to join other world leaders for the annual World Economic Forum in Davos.

From there, the Chief Executive will go to Kuwait for a state visit starting Jan. 28.

At presstime, the Palace has yet to get full details of the planned visits.

Ms Arroyo has become the most traveled Philippine President since President Fidel Ramos.

Last year, the President was frequently away, visiting 14 countries in Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

Vacationing priest missing in Misamis

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—A CATHOLIC PRIEST assigned in Cebu has disappeared while vacationing in his hometown in Misamis Oriental Dec. 31.

Fr. Lucio Bula is assigned with the Scalabrian Missionary Seminary in Barangay Pardo in Talisay, Cebu. He went home to Barangay San Juan in Balingasag town Dec. 29 to attend his high school homecoming, which was held Dec. 30.

Josie Labadan-Dulangon, a niece of Bula, told the INQUIRER her uncle had told her the day after the homecoming that he was going to bless a house in Lagonglong town on the said day.

She said Bula, 46, left their house in Balingasag around 3 p.m. but failed to come home since.

"That was the last time we spoke and we never heard from him again," Dulangon said.

Insp. Eusebia Borres-Delute, Balingasag town police chief, said the last time he saw the priest was morning of Dec. 31.

She said Bula had celebrated a mass at the Sta. Rita Parish Church.

Supt. Lyndel Desquitado, Misamis Oriental police chief, told the INQUIRER he had alerted police units in the province. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, Inquirer Mindanao*

Correction

IN THE JAN. 4 issue, a front-page story—"9 teeners killed, 15 injured in road crash"—carried a wrong dateline. The story was sent from Dagupan City—not Dapitan City.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City.

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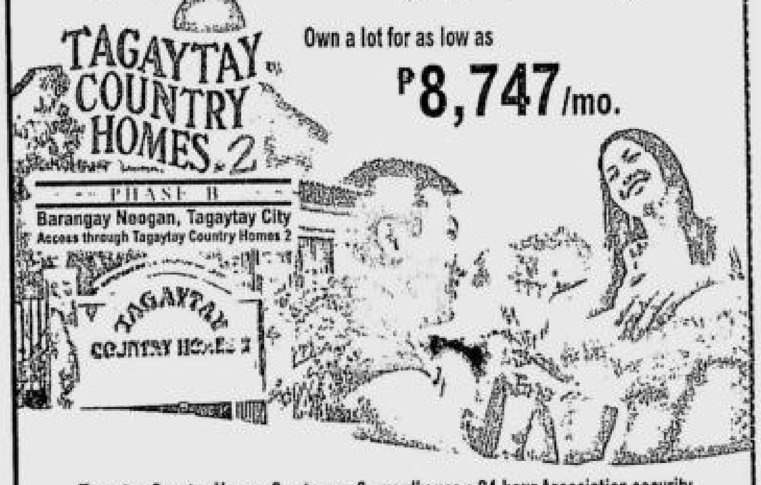
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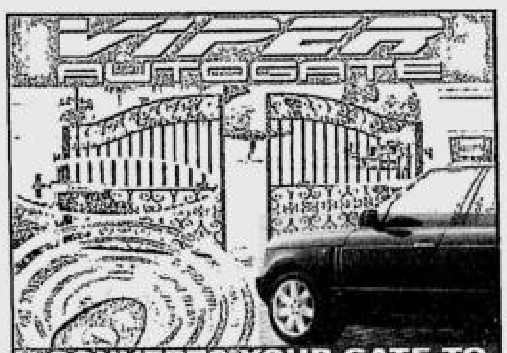
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Palace took law into own hands, says VFACom ex

From page A1

"Smith was detained on an order by Makati City [Regional Trial Court] Judge Benjamin Pozon. The order was being contested at the appellate court, and so it was [the latter] that should decide on that," Paredes pointed out.

Why, he wanted to know, did the executive branch bother to "intervene" by filing pleadings at the appellate court in support of Smith's petition to be transferred, "if they will later take the law into their own hands?"

Why 'moot'?

Paredes, a lawyer, also wondered why the appellate court considered the custody dispute already "moot" because of an agreement between Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and US Ambassador Kristie Kenney backing the transfer.

"What I know is that it would only become moot if Pozon (whose order was being challenged) already changed his mind and has effected the transfer," he said.

Paredes' past statements on what had come to be known as the Subic rape case had drawn the ire of officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs and, at one point, administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

The flak he had drawn gave rise to reports that the VFACom, an agency under the Office of the President, was on its way to being abolished.

But the office clearly has remained in operation. Paredes spoke with the INQUIRER yesterday from his VFACom desk at the DFA building in Pasay City.

He said the commission continued to operate on an annual budget of roughly P2 million from the Office of the President, serving as the body mandated to check on the Philippine and US governments' compliance with the VFA.

The commission is now "busy preparing for the next RP-US Balikatan exercises this year," he reported.

Paredes represented the VFACom at the court gallery during the marathon rape trial, and was once recognized by Judge Pozon when the court had questions regarding the VFA.

VFA review

Conceding that "good lessons" have been learned from the Subic rape case, Malacañang said it would push for a review of the 1999 agreement governing the behavior of visiting US troops.

But no timetable was given on when such a review, which would purportedly be initiated by the VFACom, would take place.

"The government is resolved to review the Visiting Forces Agreement and, if warranted, to work with Congress to amend certain provisions thereof in order to prevent future controversies," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had earlier said a review of the VFA was certainly going to be undertaken following Smith's rape conviction and the subsequent dispute over who should take custody for the duration of the appeals process.

I command you, release the rapist!
yes master!!

MASTER/SLAVE: Militant groups illustrate the allegedly lopsided RP-US relations. They say they will raise the custody issue during the 12th Asean summit in Cebu City which starts on Jan. 13. REUTERS

With Smith incarcerated at the Makati City Jail and his petition for certiorari pending at the appellate court, the US government announced the cancellation of this year's RP-US Balikatan war games.

'Stronger friendship'

Days later, the soldier was taken out of the city jail and moved to the US Embassy in the dead of night.

The US Embassy announced the resumption of the Balikatan not long after.

In a statement he issued and later repeated in a news briefing, Bunye said both the Philippine and US governments had learned "good lessons" from the controversy.

"We believe that the friendship between our two countries has grown stronger as we hurdled the issues in the spirit of mutuality," he said. "It is now time to move on as we let the wheels of justice take their course."

Asked what lessons the Philippine government had learned from the rape case, Bunye said: "We know first of all that we have to preserve the strategic relationship between our two countries.

"We believe that in the long term, this agreement would be mutually beneficial, but we have to be sensitive to certain issues."

To the question of whether the planned review was an acknowledgement that the VFA was disadvantageous to the Philippines, Bunye would only say that any agreement, whether it was the VFA or not, should undergo periodic review.

He also said the government intended to firm up its security arrangements with the United States, and pointed out that officials were glad that the forthcoming Balikatan war games would see US military personnel observing stringent rules while on Philippine soil.

Gathering momentum

A bipartisan move to revise or abrogate the VFA is gathering momentum in both houses of Congress.

Following the call of House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and leftist lawmakers led by Rep. Satur Ocampo to revisit the agreement, Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco said the House had decided to seek a review.

"The stand of the House is to take a second look at the VFA with a possible review of the provisions we deem ambiguous, like the custody of convicted US personnel," said Cuenco, chair of the House committee on foreign relations and cochair of the Legislative Oversight Committee on the VFA.

Cuenco said his counterpart, Senator Santiago, had "agreed that there is really a need to review the VFA to clarify certain provisions."

"We hope the US will listen to us. All we're asking of them is to negotiate with us to avoid any confusion," he said.

OPENLY CRITICAL the official line, VF Executive Director says that Smith's r should have been d appellate court rul coercion and bullyi

Bohol Rep. Elad House committee terprises, backed tive.

But he quickly for the controvers ators who had rat to explain their vo

How they vote

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Lawyers now focus on reversal of Smith's rape convic

From page A1

"We were supposed to pay a visit on Wednesday but we waited for a copy of the Court of Appeals decision on Smith's custody to check its implications on the custodial arrangements. It was already late afternoon when we got a copy," Corpus told the INQUIRER.

Random checks

While Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who is overseeing the inspection team's activities, has seen no need for surprise visits, Corpus said random checks on the convicted rapist would be conducted.

"We believe that it will be best to check on him at random. I, for instance, just called the embassy that I was already on my way there," Corpus said, estimating that "some 20 minutes" elapsed between his phone call and his arrival at the embassy gates.

He said he informed embassy authorities of his vehicle's license plate number beforehand, and was promptly allowed entry after "the usual security checks."

Corpus said that with less than an hour's notice, Smith's custodians would have less time to act in case they were allowing the Marine out of his 10-by-12-foot room in the Jusmag building, in violation of the custody agreement between Philippine and US authorities.

"When I got there, [Smith] was with a group of three pastors. I asked them why they were there and they told me they were giving him some form of counseling," Corpus said, adding:

"They said they'd been counseling him long before."

Corpus said he stayed for only 30 minutes: "I interrupted the counseling session. I let them resume ASAP (as soon as possible)."

By Corpus' account, Smith, dressed in a yellow T-shirt and beige shorts, said he was expecting his Missouri-based parents to come for a visit before the end of the month.

Corpus said his impression was that US authorities were hewing to the custody agreement and were keeping Smith in strict detention.

During the yearlong trial, Smith and three other US Marines accused along with him of raping "Nicole," a Filipino woman, on Nov. 1, 2005, were held inside the Jusmag building.

Appellant's brief

The three others were eventually acquitted by Judge Pozon, but Corpus said even they were being detained at the US military base in Okinawa, Japan.

Smith's lawyer Justiniano said the Marine was "glad" about the Court of Appeals' Wednesday decision saying it could do nothing about the custody dispute because Smith's Dec. 29 transfer to the US Embassy from the Makati City Jail (where he had been committed by Judge Pozon) had rendered the matter "moot."

"While our petition [for a temporary restraining order on Smith's incarceration at the city jail] was denied, we got what we wanted and he's just satisfied that we did ... Now, we are just waiting for the notice from the Court of Appeals requiring us to file the appellant's brief," Justiniano said.

The lawyer was referring to a document asking the assigned division of the appellate court "to set aside" Pozon's judgment of conviction.

According to Justiniano, the appeal will move as soon as the court gives the legal team the go-signal to file the brief, with a 45-day deadline.

Per procedure, he said, the Office of the Solicitor General shall then file its answer to the brief as counsel for the people in the criminal case.

The court, however, has yet to assign the case to a division, he said.

Neither Pozon's court nor Nicole's camp may intervene in the paper-against-paper battle, Justiniano said, citing jurisprudence limiting the private complainant's role in the appeals process to "seeking indemnity [and] not demanding punishment of the accused."

"[Nicole's camp] can only intervene if the Solicitor General agrees with our position that my client committed no crime, because that will be the only time that her claim to damages will be prejudiced," Justiniano said.

Ursua's moves

Aware of the limitation, Nicole's lawyer Evalyn Ursua filed on Tuesday a special appearance before the appellate court seeking the outright dismissal of Smith's appeal and an arrest warrant against him.

She cited Smith's midnight "escape" from the city jail last Dec. 29 as basis.

"The court has the power to dismiss the appeal based on the rule that when a convicted criminal escapes prison, an appeal should be dismissed ... And Daniel Smith not only escaped, he [also] fled to a foreign country—the US Embassy, which is US territory—and the court has lost jurisdiction over him," Ursua said.

"The Court of Appeals has no more business entertaining his appeal and his conviction must be declared final. Our position is, there should be no more appeal and the court should rule on our motion because that is critical, given that the Court of Appeals has lost jurisdiction over Smith," she said.

Another ace

As another ace against Smith, Ursua is also preparing to supplement a petition she filed before the Supreme Court on June 19, 2006, asking the tribunal to rule on the constitutionality of the RP-US Visiting Agreement.

The petition questions the validit ticle 5, Paragraph 6 of the VFA, the the custody dispute over Smith.

The provision gives the US gove custody of any American soldier before a Philippine court for the dur judicial proceedings upon its re

It also states that judicial proce except the time for appeal, shall b pleted within a year; otherwise the ernment "shall be relieved of any tion" to produce the accused col court.

Ursua said her addendum to the would ask the high court "to di transfer of Smith to Philippine custo "to declare illegal and unconstitutio agreement between Foreign Secre berto Romulo and US Ambassado Kenney, which Philippine and US ties had invoked as basis for Smith' to US custody.

Strong public opinion

But according to Amado Valdez, the University of the East College only "strong public opinion" can the US Embassy to return Smith to trol of Philippine authorities in with the appellate court's decision the Philippines' "exclusive juris over the soldier.

Cops find witnesses disputing Abra Governor Valera's story

From page A1

Panday, 63, who was arrested three days after the killings, had confessed he had acted as a "lookout" for the group that carried out the P5-million contract on Bersamin. He said Dupo had told him that Valera was the brains behind the assassination.

Valera has denied the charge. Except for Panday, the rest of the suspects are at large.

But De los Santos clarified that the information was still "circumstantial evidence" requiring corroboration.

On Friday, the governor and his bodyguards were arrested on board the Suburban over a traffic violation. Police found a stash of firearms and a grenade in the vehicle, prompting them to file weapons possession charges against Valera and his guards.

Same woman

Valera, 61, was detained on Dec. 29 and was released on Jan. 3 after posting bail in a Quezon City court.

De los Santos said investigators traced Valera's Chevrolet SUV to Juno Cars Inc. on Shaw Boulevard, from which it was purchased.

Investigation revealed Valera bought the SUV for P1.695 million and personally paid the full amount on Nov. 30, 2006. At least two dealership employees said Valera was accompanied by four men and a woman, described as "tall, *mestiza*, with lo hair and dimples, sexy and with a lo

Upon being shown photos of D the two employees said she looked woman with Valera.

The same employees positively i Dupo, a former vice mayor of Abr

From yap to growl, device dogs intruders, jailbreakers

From page A1

ing—to see if an animal is responding to a threat instead of just routinely woofing—the company aims to replace or supplement expensive electronic surveillance systems.

"There is currently very little utilization of the watchdog's early warning capabilities," says the privately owned manufacturer Bio-Sense Technologies, based in the Israeli town of Petah Tikva, on its website.

The company—which says dogs have better night vision than humans and a vastly superior sense of smell and hearing—used computers to analyze 350 barks and found dogs of all breeds and sizes barked the same alarm when they sensed a threat.

If the dogs sense an intruder, dozens of sensors around the facility pick up their "alarm bark" and alert the human operators in the control room.

No escape attempts since

Dubbed "Doguard," the Dog Bio Security system is in place at the high-security Eshel Prison as well as Israeli military bases, water installations, farms, ranches, garages and in Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

Eshel Prison installed the system last year to supplement its existing network of electric fences and human guards, prison officer Bazov Moris told Reuters.

Now Rex, a brown American Staffordshire Terrier, Emmy, a white Caanan, and 27 other dogs guarding the prison are tracked by sensors to alert guards to any attempted breakout at the jail, which houses about 3,000 prisoners, including Israelis and Palestinians.

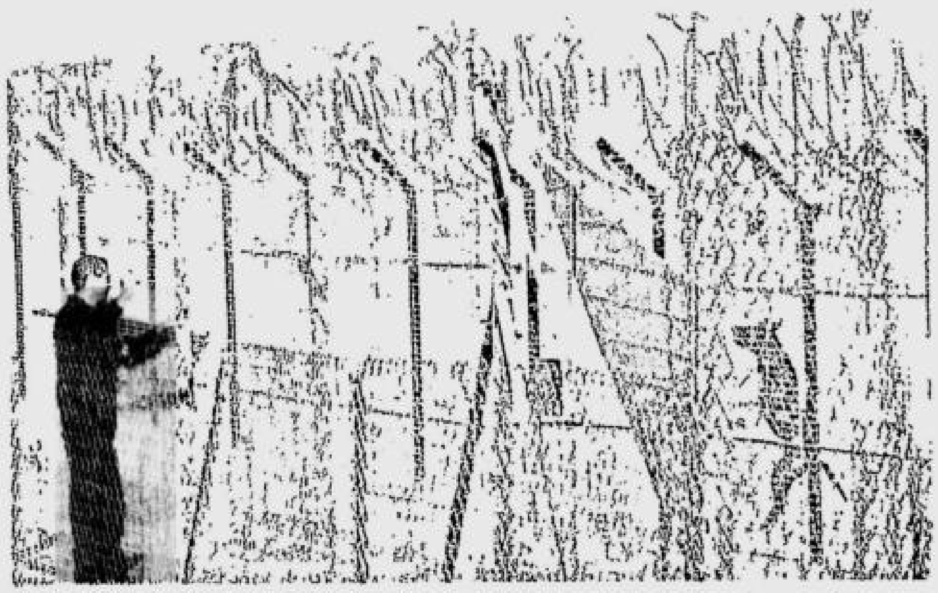
There have been no escape attempts since the system was installed, but Moris is convinced it works. He said prisoners at other facilities had been able to escape "because dogs barked but no alert was sent to the guards."

During a demonstration, an alarm wailed as Rex and Emmy raced, growling and snarling, alongside one of the facility's metal fences, which a man in a brown uniform was trying to scale from the other side.

Not foolproof

Officers in a small basement office nearby watched on a surveillance video and spoke into their walkie-talkies as a wall of computer screens flashed in red: "Dog alarm in Sector 12."

Seconds later, several prison guards, wielding clubs, raced to the scene and tackled the man to the ground.



SECURITY SYSTEM designed by an Israeli firm ensures that jailbreakers and intruders will find a guard dog's bark worse than its bite. A prison warden demonstrates how the technology works. REUTERS

The dog bark-reader is just one of a batch of innovative security systems to emerge from Israel, which business magazine Forbes said last December had emerged as "the go-to country for antiterrorism technologies."

By monitoring not just the dogs' barks, but also their physiological responses—like heart rates—the Doguard joins a trend for computer systems bu mal knowledge that humans also s

Another Israeli example, fr pect Detection Systems, offers checkpoints a computer quiz th guards if travelers show a mark ological response to particular questions.

However, Doguard is not f When first set up at Eshel Prison water installation and farm in rael, the dogs triggered seve alarms.

"The dogs need two to three adapt—they must get to know the ry," said Daniel Low, chief executiv of Meniv Rishon, the municipal w tem of the Israeli town of Rishon L

Low said he had installed the several places to replace guards.

Galia Alon, an official at Modi a large Israeli security company plies private guards and equipm tioned against relying on dogs as of defense.

"Dogs are excellent at spottin ers—they are well trained and ha sharpened sense of smell than she said. "But people can identify

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Jala said critics of the VFA like Biazon should study the "possible amendments" to the agreement that senators themselves ratified during the Estrada administration.

"It is ironic that Senator Biazon, who is now calling for Smith's return to Philippine custody, was a co-sponsor of the proposed VFA treaty at the time he was chair of the Senate defense committee," he said.

Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel called on the Senate to hold an emergency session to review and revoke the VFA.

Unlike the House of Representatives, the Senate may convene at any time during the recess to address an urgent legislative matter even without the President's approval, Baraquel said.

"We can never expect this government to protect national interest and the basic dignity of Filipinos, and thus any opportunity that it has to destroy our institutions further should be removed," she said.

Baraquel said the "illegal" transfer of Smith "shows that the combination of a flawed agreement and an illegitimate government is a serious threat that should be addressed without delay."

She said it was the Senate's "moral obligation" to promptly rescind the VFA.

Renegotiation

Sen. Richard Gordon said he was open to renegotiating the VFA but that pending this, the government should respect it.

"Let's renegotiate it. I'm in favor of that if that's what we really want. But if the Americans don't want it, what can we do? We can't force it," said Gordon, a member of the bicameral Legislative Oversight Committee on the VFA (Lovfa).

Meanwhile, however, Gordon said, the government had no choice but to comply with the provisions of the agreement.

"Unequal treaties are the result of unequal bargaining strength. If we signed it, we must follow it. If we didn't want it, we should not have signed it," he said. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

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3. Candida Diaz	T-44000	H-187101	17.7300	Kalaisan, Kid.
4. Leo Rellin	T-62671	114, C-2, Psd-12-00392	12.6846	Kalaisan, Kid.
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6. GAMI, Inc.	T-53778	136, C. Csd-5055	3.6588	Katipunan, Kid.
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	T-24138	Lot 139-A, Psd-56193	24.6912	Sikitan, Kid.
9. Rolando Mendoza	P-36699	76, Bsd-11021	12.4205	Macebolig, Kid.
10. Pacifico Mendoza, Jr.	P-35742	32, Bsd-11021	12.6483	Macebolig, Kid.
11. Eduardo Mendoza	P-35743	106, 98, 97, Bsd-11021	11.0188	Macebolig, Kid.
12. Eliseo Ferrer	P-32964	407, Pls-715	8.7970	Meocan, Arakan
13. Heracleo Ferrer	P-45627	84, Pls-715	9.9799	Meocan, Arakan
14. Gabriel Cajela	V-11325	879, Pls-498	8.9897	Doroluman, Ara.
15. Leon Dela Cruz	V-11324	882, Pls-498	5.3399	do
16. Sinanga Masangkay	V-11271	912, Pls-498	9.7595	do

(Sgd.) **ENGR. MARION Y. ABELLA, CESO V**
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer II

(PDI – Jan. 5, 2007)

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"Since the US Embassy is passionate about the transfer, the possibility of returning [Smith] to jail ... is very remote unless there is strong public opinion," Valdez said in an interview over dzMM radio.

Valdez, a former commissioner of the Presidential Commission on the VFA, said the Arroyo administration created "a big problem" when it removed Smith from the city jail without waiting for the decision of the Court of Appeals.

He said that if the US Embassy under Ambassador Kenney wanted to help Philippine officials comply with the court's ruling, it could consider "surrendering" supervision and control of Smith's detention quarters to Philippine authorities.

Said Valdez: "US authorities could waive their sovereignty in that portion of their territory. That will reverse the situation—where before, they asked us to waive custody [over Smith], now, to comply with the court decision, they should waive custody over [Smith's detention quarters] for us to have control.

"Another option is to rent a house near Forbes Park or another place near the [ambassador's residence] and give the security and control of that place to Philippine authorities.

"The third option is for the US to return Smith to us." *With a report from Armand N. Nocum*

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town, as one of Valera's companions who, they said, was always positioned beside Valera and was holding a black clutch bag.

De los Santos said investigators would invite Dimagiba "soon" to help in the probe. Outgoing CIDG chief police Director Jesus Versoza said the former beauty queen was not a suspect.

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looking at them and talking to them, and they are more inclined to catch them."

Better in pairs

Yossi Brami, manager of a dairy at Kibbutz Gezer, a communal farm, had the system installed two months ago. He said he was told dogs work better in pairs because one signals to the other if an intruder appears, so two were placed to guard his calves.

The dogs used in the alarm system were rescued from shelters, Bio-Sense chief executive officer Eyal Zehavi said, adding some clients asked for them to be trained professionally first.

Eshel Prison's dogs live in individual kennels. Several times a day, they are let out to patrol buildings, where they are unleashed in a fenced compound.

At Kibbutz Gezer, dogs Chief and Lola are kept on a long chain and are released to run around the farm several times a day. The dogs guarding Meniv Rishon are also chained.

Israeli animal rights societies said they knew little about the system but it was preferable for dogs to live indoors and unleashed. *Reuters*

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OPINION

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EDITORIAL

OF COURSE, JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZAlez would shrug off moves to disbar him. He's been down that road before, and it didn't stop his political career—or prevent his appointment to the Arroyo Cabinet. His famously—even notoriously—combative personality requires him to sneer at any and all criticism.

But his sneer the other day, directed at media, truly boggles the mind. When he was asked to comment on criticisms that the transfer to US custody of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith was rushed, the justice secretary replied, "My golly, it's better that way. What would they want? That we will just let the judgment become final and then pardon him?"

What did Gonzalez mean? Are we to gather from his outburst that the Arroyo administration's game plan was to pardon Smith? Was that Malacañang's end game? Was it the US Embassy's ultimate demand?

Until Gonzalez broached the idea, no one was saying that a presidential pardon for Smith was in the cards—not publicly, anyway. A pardon would have been a non-solution to a genuine issue; it would have been too much. At least, that is what any reasonable survey of the situation would indicate, but then Gonzalez isn't famous for being a reasonable man.

The justice secretary's legal reasoning seems to go like this: Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon says that in the absence of a mutually agreed detention facility, Smith has to be held in an ordinary Philippine jail. The US government and the executive department both disagree with Pozon, primarily because Pozon believes the judicial process ended when he handed down the verdict on the case. Still, the Philippine and American governments negotiated a place of detention, which would be the US Embassy, until Smith's appeals were resolved. But instead of allowing the Court of Appeals to resolve Smith's appeal for detention at the embassy, Gonzalez preempted the process by engineering Smith's midnight transfer from the Makati City Jail to the embassy. With the connivance not only of the interior secretary and the executive secretary, but President Macapagal-Arroyo no less. And all because, in Gonzalez's mind, this latest version of a calibrated preemptive response is better than trusting the courts, because the only executive option left would have been a pardon?

But as we've said, whoever said a pardon was, or should ever have been, in the cards? Time and again, the public has bristled at the hard-headed assumptions of Gonzalez and company that the only way out of a legal problem is to act tough and brazen out the questions that ensue. The justice secretary pouts at the "emotions" shown by the public without pausing to think how much he has contributed to inciting such anger.

Webster's defines "scofflaw," the word used by former Sen. Rene Saguisag to describe Gonzalez, as someone who is "a contemptuous law violator." It is an apt description of the justice secretary. When Pozon made his decisions, he was acting within his authority; and to be fair, the executive branch, in contesting Pozon along lines similar to that of the US Embassy, was doing its job, too, being a party, with the US government, to the Visiting Forces Agreement. And certainly the US military had all the right to cancel joint military exercises to show its displeasure over the local interpretation of the VFA. What is objectionable was the way the administration panicked, and the means by which Gonzalez tried to save the day.

But that is the way he has tried to save the day for his boss, each and every time they found themselves in a legal pickle: Do something quickly, even surreptitiously, so that the courts will be left with no choice but to say what's done is done. That isn't justice. It isn't even the law. It's opportunism of the worst kind, because it serves partisan political interests but not the national interest.

In a fit of pique, President Diosdado Macapagal changed the date on which we celebrate Independence Day because the United States was giving him a tough time securing benefits for our war veterans. He turned his tantrum into an opportunity for nationalism, and it cost him what all presidents crave most: a state visit to Washington. Thus does politics accidentally become something approximating statesmanship. Posterity has approved the change of our Independence Day. But it will not look kindly on his daughter's latest demonstration of how low her opinion is of the judiciary.

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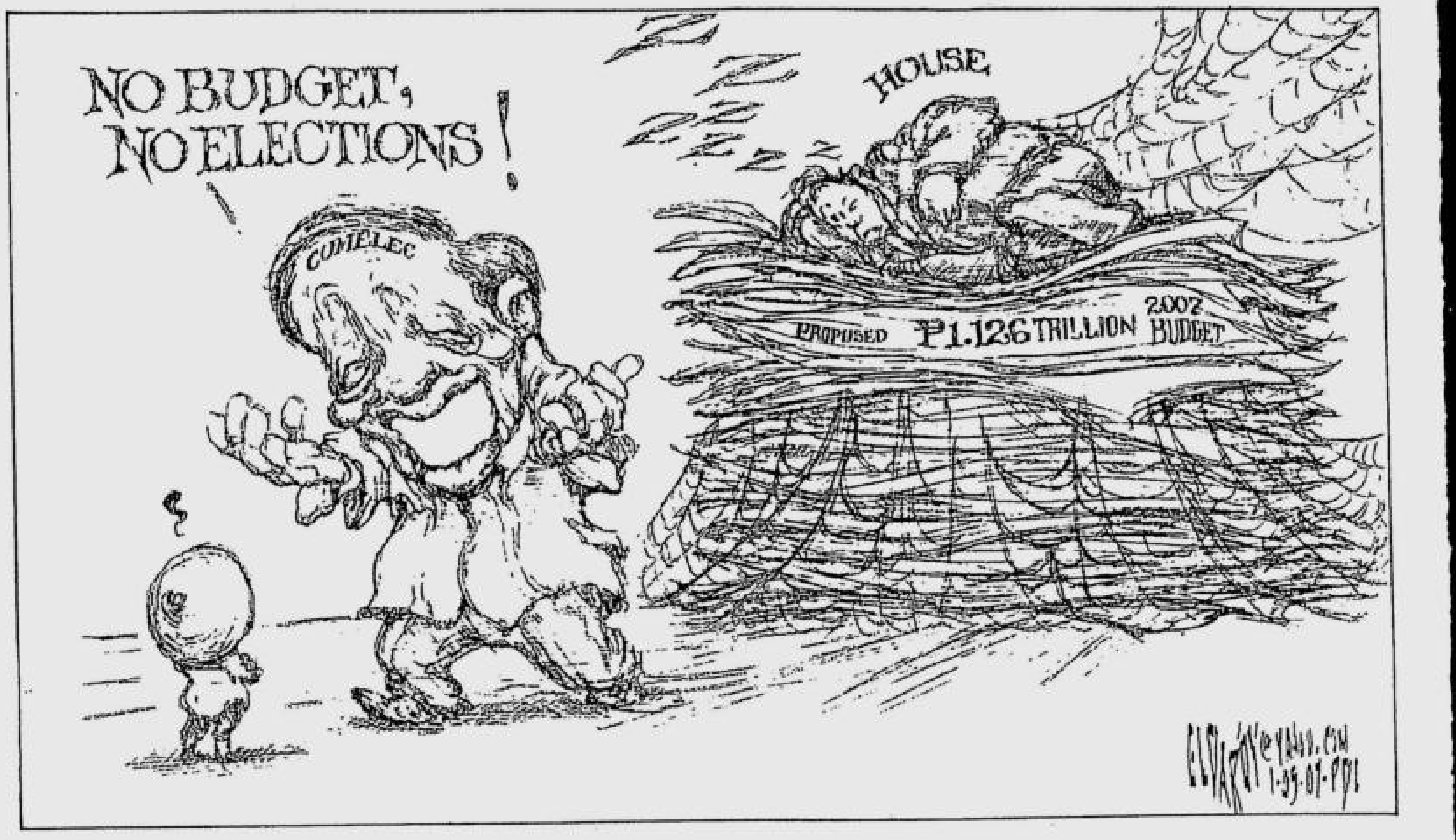

US citizenship waiting for GMA et al?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT IS NOT TRUE THAT AMERICAN CITIZENship is ready to be granted to President Macapagal-Arroyo and her legal advisers when they are chased out of the Philippines by angry Filipinos. But come to think of it, GMA and some of her Cabinet members (Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol, Solicitor General Eduardo Nachura, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, etc.) are now more American than Filipino. It seems they love American rapist Daniel Smith more than they love his Filipino victim and the rest of the Filipino race, judging from the way they betrayed the sovereignty of the Philippines for the sake of Smith.

But it is not true either that a community for the Filipino Benedict Arnolds is being built in Missouri, the home state of Smith. Although these pseudo-Americans would prefer to live in America after what they have done, it seems that natives of Missouri protested when they heard of the plan. They would be security risks, they claim. "If they can betray their fellow Filipinos," they said, "they can also betray us."

Next to betrayal of God, betrayal of one's country is the greatest sin that can be committed by man. If Saddam Hussein was hanged for crimes against humanity, what should be the punishment for people who commit crimes against their own country and people? A specially hot place in hell?

* * *

We don't really have to wait until lightning unleashed by an angry God strikes the bunch to avenge the betrayal. We can punish them sooner—during the elections in May.

Many of the people mentioned above will run for public office—some for the Senate, some for the House of Representatives, others for local government positions. Just remember their names, and remember not to vote for them. If they run for dogcatcher, don't vote for them. If a dog runs against any of them, vote for the dog. Dogs are more loyal than they.

Include among the names to remember (to be thrown to the *kangkungan* during the elections) those of the congressmen who tried to railroad Con-ass through Congress recently. To refresh your memories, I will mention the more notorious ones: Jose de Venecia, Edcel Lagman, Luis Villafuerte, Prospero Nograles, Prospero Pichay, Douglas Cagas (you may add other names). Remember, do *not* vote for them. They don't deserve it.

* * *

After seeing the beautiful multi-colored fireworks lighting up the night sky last New Year's Eve and reading in the papers that injuries caused by firecrackers rose by 64 percent, it occurred to me that we could make every New Year's Eve safer and still more beautiful and merry simply by limiting pyrotechnics to those that rise in the sky and burst into beautiful colorful displays. Stop making the noisemakers that explode on the ground like the *triangulo*, Five-Star, whistle bomb, *bawang*, *pla-pla*, etc. Statistics show that many injuries were caused by these explosives, and many of the victims were children because it is children who buy and handle them. If the factories don't produce them anymore, nobody will get hurt, right?

Factories will make more money making and selling the pyrotechnics that burst in the air (with the exception of the *kwitis* which has the bad habit of prematurely exploding on the ground). Factories make the noisemakers primarily for variety and for the children because they are cheaper.

If it is necessary to pass laws or ordinances banning the manufacture and sale of explosives, then let's do it. It will save many fingers. Factories and traders will still make plenty of money on the safer, more beautiful pyrotechnics.

For noisemakers, why not record the noise during one New Year's Eve revelry, or get the soundtracks of battles from war movies and documentaries and play them at full volume on stereo or any public address system on New Year's Eve? Still as noisy but safer, cheaper and reusable every year. A recording company that makes and sells compact discs with battle soundtracks can make a killing every Christmas season.

* * *

With the New Year, jockeying for the top positions in the Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenue is again revving up. Ambitious wannabes have been after the positions of Commissioners Napoleon Morales and Jose Mario Buñag since last year. They are the reasons for the black propaganda appearing in media against the two top tax collectors. Why are these two positions the most sought-after government jobs?

At Customs, however, the performance of Morales is superlative. Actual collections have surpassed the target, so Morales bashers have concentrated on the so-called "hot meat" smuggled into the country supposedly by a company linked to Morales. However, the company, Golden Ark, was found to have a fictitious address and was accredited in 2005, before Morales was named Customs chief. The agency which should have checked Golden Ark is the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS), the group in charge of enforcing rules against smuggling and pilferage. But ironically, the commissioner wannabe comes from the CIIS.

At the BIR, a city treasurer and a relative of a friend of GMA are both after Buñag's post, so that his failure to achieve unrealistically high collection goals is being sold to media. Like Morales, however, Buñag has posted record-high revenue collections.

CA verdict not the end of VFA debate

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

BOTH SIDES HAVE CLAIMED TO BE VINDIcated by the Court of Appeals decision on Wednesday, but the verdict does not by itself close the debate provoked by Malacañang's earlier decision to return Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith to US custody.

There are actually three court cases that have arisen from "Nicole's" rape complaint in November 2005. The first was the criminal proceeding in the Makati regional trial court before Judge Benjamin Pozon. In November 2006, Pozon convicted Smith of rape but acquitted his three co-accused, and sent Smith to the Makati City Jail over the objections of his defense counsel who insisted on continuing US custody.

A second case was filed before the Supreme Court in June 2006, while the criminal proceeding was on-going, this time by Nicole's counsel, to challenge the validity and application of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) itself. That case remains pending to this day.

The third was filed in the Court of Appeals by Smith's counsel in December 2006, after his conviction, and focuses solely on custody, Smith insisting that he should remain in US premises in the Philippines under the VFA.

(From televised news reports, there is apparently a fourth case. After Smith was "spirited out" of the Makati City Jail and to the US Embassy, Nicole's counsels, Evalyn Ursua and Harry Roque, charged the responsible Philippine government officials with contempt of court. It seems that they filed this as an independent complaint, rather than as a mere incident of the appellate court proceedings.)

The court verdict was deftly written by Justice Apolinario D. Bruselas, himself a former prosecutor and trial judge who taught Criminal Procedure at the UP College of Law before he joined the court. The court "mooted" the Smith petition. He had gone to court to ask that he be returned to US custody, but that is now a done act. On the other hand, the court upheld Pozon's ruling that the Philippines retains custody over Smith until the two countries signed a proper detention agreement as required by the VFA, as Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and US Ambassador Kristie Kenney now have done.

Below is the relevant portion of the VFA's Chapter V on Criminal Jurisdiction. Bits and pieces of this legalese have been cited elsewhere, but they are so central to the debate that the reader must see them more fully.

Paragraph 6 says: "The custody of any US personnel over whom the Philippines is to exercise jurisdiction shall immediately reside with US military authorities, if they so request, from the commission of the offense until completion of all judicial proceedings. US military authorities shall, upon formal notification by the Philippine authorities and without delay, make such personnel available to those authorities in time for any investigative or judicial proceedings relating to the offense with which the person has been charged. In extraordinary cases, the Philippine Government shall present its position to the US Government regarding custody, which the US Government shall take into full account. In the event Philippine judicial proceedings are not completed within one year, the US shall be relieved of any obligations under this paragraph. The one-year period will not include the time necessary to appeal. ...."

Paragraph 10 says: "The confinement or detention by Philippine authorities of US personnel shall be carried out in facilities agreed on by appropriate Philippine and US authorities. ...."

One debate focuses on the term "all judicial proceedings." Smith insists that his conviction is not yet final, and he must therefore remain in US custody until he has exhausted his appeals. On the other hand, Ursua and Roque, together with former Senators Jovito R. Salonga and Wigberto Tañada, support the view (affirmed by Pozon and Bruselas) that it pertains to the trial stage alone. Indeed, paragraph 6 says that "judicial proceedings" must be completed within one year, and then proceeds to say that the one-year period does not include the time for appeal. Bruselas pointed out the irony: Smith would limit judicial proceedings to the trial when he insists on the one-year deadline, but would expand it to the appeal when he insists on continuing US custody.

Two, after conviction, paragraph 10 would require that "appropriate Philippine and US authorities" agree on the facilities for the confinement of US personnel. Pozon invoked this, saying there was no such agreement then, and that an agreement later signed by the Department of Justice—and not by the Department of Foreign Affairs—did not satisfy that requirement. Malacañang now invokes the same clause, saying that the Romulo-Kenney agreement was precisely what the VFA required.

I lay the blame squarely at the foot of the lawyers who advised the Senate during the ratification of the VFA. The VFA was a sell-out, the Republic demoted to "present[ing] its position to the US ... which the US shall take into full account," even for crimes and trials done on Philippine soil. The text was crafted, as it were, deliberately to defer the hard choices, and today the deferment exacts a steep price. We prosecuted Smith in the name of the "People of the Philippines," properly and solely on the question of his guilt or innocence, yet now we have bargained away that moral ascendancy, reduced to begging for the prisoner and realizing it is we who had been captive all along.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

'Blue Danube Waltz' celebrates EU expansion

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE HISTORIC ENTRY OF BULGARIA AND Romania into the European Union on New Year's Day was celebrated in the closing moments of the traditional New Year's concert of the Vienna Philharmonic, broadcast live and watched on TV by millions of people in 50 countries around the world.

The world-famous conductor Zubin Mehta, directing the Vienna Philharmonic, dedicated the "Blue Danube Waltz" by Austrian composer Johann Straus II to the two new members of the EU at Vienna's fully packed Musikverein, home to the Philharmonic. In the traditional finale, the conductor closed the concert with the popular "Radetzky March," to the rhythmic clapping of the audience.

The celebration of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania as members of the EU with the "Blue Danube Waltz" had both heavy cultural and historical symbolism. The Danube, the European Union's longest river and second only to Europe's longest, the Volga River in Russia, connects Bulgaria and Romania with other EU member states and underscores the new members' permanent link to the heart of Europe. Their accession extended the borders of the now 27-nation bloc eastward to the Black Sea.

The Danube originates in the Black Forest in Germany, flowing eastward, passing through several Central and Eastern European countries before emptying into the Black Sea through the Danube Delta in Romania. It flows through 10 countries: Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and the Ukraine.

The New Year's concert was one of the most sparkling performances of the Philharmonic in recent years. This concert has been the most scintillating musical event in the Western world, celebrating the New Year since the tradition of the concert of Viennese waltzes was initiated by conductor Clemens Krauss on Aug. 11, 1929, exclusively on Strauss' waltzes and polkas.

The last New Year concert was a special event. Zubin Mehta conducted for the fourth time (he had done it in 1990, 1995 and 1997). In other years, famous conductors alternately directed the Philharmonic, among them Lorin Maasel, Claudio Abbado and Riccardo Muti.

This year's concert featured works of the Strauss family, including Josef Strauss and Edward Strauss, who have been overshadowed by Johann Strauss, father and son. Six of the lesser known compositions of the Strauss family were performed for the first time in the concert. Another featured work was "Elfenreigen" by Joseph Hellmesberger Jr.

The admission of Bulgaria and Romania marked the completion of the latest round of enlargement of the European Union, bringing the number of member states up to 27. There have been six enlargements of the EU since it was created by six states in 1958, following the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952. The biggest wave of enlargement took place on May 1, 2004, when 10 new members were admitted: the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. In that enlargement, the EU admitted eight new members to the east and two in the Mediterranean, expanding its total membership of 15 to 25.

Romania represents the EU's farthest thrust eastward. Its 22 million citizens comprise the largest population to enter the union since Poland joined three years ago. Its accession expands the external EU border by 1,682 kilometers, along the Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia and the Black Sea. With the latest additions, the EU population increases to nearly 489 million, embracing 32 official languages, ranging from Bulgarian to Gaelic.

The entry of Romania marks a symbolic final break from a difficult past. Romania suffered one of Eastern Europe's most brutal communist dictatorships under Nicolae Ceausescu before he was overthrown in a bloody revolution in 1989.

Fireworks and cheers celebrated the entry of Romania and Bulgaria, the last of the Eastern countries that used to be behind the Soviet Iron Curtain to make a break from their communist past and join the democracies and market economies of the EU. They are now the EU's poorest members, with per capita wealth amounting to only a third of the EU average. They hope that EU membership will help them raise their living standards and launch their economy toward prosperity.

For Romania and Bulgaria, accession is only the beginning of the arduous climb toward attaining the basic standards set by the EU for its members—requiring them to be secular and democratic states, adhering to the rule of law and maintaining democratic institutions, to have relatively open market economies and to lift their economic output close to the level of other EU economies. Much has to be done. Romania is the least developed member state with widespread poverty and an undeveloped infrastructure.

The entry of the two Balkan countries comes as the EU is experiencing expansion fatigue following the enlargement in 2004. Further expansion has come to a pause because of fears that the EU might already be overburdened to provide generous economic aid to the new members. The accession has heightened fears that westward migration from poor members in the east would flood the EU with lowly paid migrant workers competing for jobs, undermining its social standards. The westward migration poses problems to Filipino migrant workers in Western Europe, competing for jobs with multi-skilled Eastern European labor and especially with Polish medical workers who are much in demand in Western Europe.

* * *

Comments to aedoronila@westnet.com.au

Nandy's latest crusade

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"HOW OLD WERE YOU IN 1989?" ASKS NANDY Pacheco of my daughter Miya over lunch at the newly opened Portico restaurant in Serendra, The Fort.

"Three years old," she replies, and Nandy is visibly taken aback. She is, after all, all of 20 years old now, a college student. And the realization that she was only a pre-schooler when we first began discussing Nandy's advocacies has thrown us both for a loop.

"The trouble with Nandy is that he makes you pay for your lunch," kidded then-INQUIRER chair Eggie Apostol at that first lunch, at Mr. Poon's in Ermita (if I'm not mistaken). Well, I have been "paying" for our lunches ever since, even if Nandy always footed the bill. There was never such a thing as a "free lunch" where Nandy was concerned, because every meeting involved some issue, some legislative measure he was pushing and was passionate about.

Over the years, we had built a joshing, casual relationship, but every meeting ended with Nandy heatedly holding forth on whatever issue it was that was eating at his gut.

That's what makes Nandy one of my favorite people, actually. Because nothing—not retirement, not creeping age, not even a half-hearted attempt to start life in Canada with his wife Priscilla and children which he ultimately abandoned—could douse his passion. If I still believe that a better future is possible in this country, it's because of Nandy Pacheco. It's because of people like him, who do not allow petty concerns to get in the way of their passionate commitment to this country and to bettering our people's lives.

* * *

AT THE time we met, Nandy was a year from optional retirement from the Asian Development Bank, where he had been in charge of public relations. His passion of the moment—one he would nurture for more than a decade and is still quite involved in—was gun control. At the time, as spokesman of the Gunless Society, he was pushing for the passage of a bill that would have made it illegal for a law enforcer to carry a gun unless he (or she) was in uniform and on official duty, and for civilians to be armed outside of their homes and without not just a license but also a permit to carry.

Despite the fact that the measure was supported by more than a million individuals who had signed a petition, and even if the bill had been passed by the Senate, it was ultimately "gunned down" in the House of Representatives.

His energies may have flagged somewhat after this setback, but far from abandoning his fervor for gun-control, Nandy found another cause to espouse: good governance and enlightened politics.

These days, Nandy is wearing another hat, that of secretary general of Ang Kapatiran, a fledgling political party that he helped found, and is now headed by Manuel Dayrit as chair and lawyer Mario Ongkiko as president.

Ang Kapatiran's (The Brotherhood) goal is overarching: no less than the overhauling of Philippine politics, to "bring to an end the politics of pork barrel, celebrity politics, deception, deceit, hypocrisy, dishonesty, patronage, pay-off, unprincipled compromises, expansion of political family dynasties, and the politics of guns, goons and gold."

* * *

IT'S a rather breathtaking challenge, but Nandy says it's possible to achieve only if their "target audience" receives the message and responds in kind. And their target, he says, are "the lay faithful," Catholic or Christian Filipinos who are disgusted with the way things are but are clueless about what they, as individuals, can do to turn things around. (Do they have a message for Muslims and non-Christians, too?)

The work of transforming politics, says Nandy, is one that the Church and its leaders have laid squarely on the shoulders of the laity, quoting Pope Benedict XVI who declared in his first encyclical, "The just ordering of society and the State is a central responsibility of politics," while stressing that "the direct duty to work for the just ordering of society is proper to the lay faithful."

"We shouldn't keep waiting for the bishops to speak out before we ourselves start speaking up and organizing," says Nandy. For now, Ang Kapatiran is searching for men and women who believe in its platform and are willing to commit themselves and their time, energy and resources to campaign for the party in the coming polls as well as to join its line-up for candidates, from the senatorial level down to local posts.

* * *

AMONG THE planks in the party's platform is a "holistic and integral" approach to politics, the abolition of the pork barrel and eradication of both legal and illegal forms of gambling, a "multidimensional" approach to peace and order, promotion of a "respect life" attitude in society, and, entirely in line with Nandy's lifelong advocacy of gun control, the promotion of progressive disarmament nationally and internationally through the United Nations.

The solution to our political ills, says Nandy, starts with personal transformation but logically leads to social transformation, to the harnessing of community will to change systems and values.

Speaking of the whole Cha-cha campaign, Nandy says it is not likely to succeed without an overhaul of the underlying system. "It's like someone changing clothes without bothering to take a bath first."

Nandy says a source of inspiration was the remark of a Kapatiran leader who explained that he had joined the party because "I didn't want to face my grandchildren one day and have nothing to say when they ask me: 'Lolo, what did you do to make the country a better place?'"

Well, I quipped, should his grandchildren one day ask him this question, his wife and children might answer: "Your lolo did more and continues to do more than his share."

Aguinaldo's decree on young love

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

AGES AGO, WHEN I WAS STILL SEARCHING for a niche in Philippine history on which to build a research interest and develop a career, I thought of working on Philip II, the 16th-century Spanish monarch whose name now defines us as a country and people. I read that he lived an almost monastic existence in the giant tomb that is El Escorial outside Madrid, where he spent his waking hours poring over papers or tinkering with his collection of relics of saints. Philip ruled an empire from a small desk and I wanted to see not just the documents that pertained to the Philippines, but also the marginal notes he scribbled on these to get a sense of what he thought of the Philippines, and how he wanted it organized and governed. Unfortunately, this required being physically present in a Spanish archive and learning to read 16th-century written Spanish with all its short cuts and abbreviations. I folded up quickly and shifted to something equally challenging but closer to home.

First, I did Rizal, and put him in context by learning about the late 19th-century Philippines. I moved on to the Philippine Revolution, and eventually the Philippine-American War.

Looking back at two decades of research, I realize that I have been bound by the available documents. As the late Teodoro Agoncillo used to say, "No document, no history." What about gaps in the documents, or different ways of reading one document? There always is something new to be found in something old.

People in the past scribbled a great deal because they didn't have cell phones and the Internet. Not that we write less these days, but rather very little hard copy is left behind for historians to work on, and this can be both good and bad depending on how one looks at it. If an archeologist tries to reconstruct life in the past through artifacts excavated from earth and sea, the historian does likewise going through traces of the past in written records. In my work, I have gone through travel accounts, letters and diaries that paint a direct picture. Sometimes there are other documents available like laws and decrees. Laws are not the most engaging papers to read, particularly if these are outdated and you have little or no legal training. Yet I have found a lot of interesting laws and decrees from the Aguinaldo government that provide an idea of their world and their concerns.

Browsing through the third volume of "The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States," these being documents compiled by J.R.M. Taylor, I came across a decree issued in Malolos on Sept. 17, 1898 concerning women, under the age of consent, who wanted to marry against the wishes of their parents. I wonder how we go about this these days, but the process is clearly outlined in this document signed by Emilio Aguinaldo that begins:

"Taking into consideration the many questions submitted to this Government with regard to the formalities to be observed for the custody of young women under age who desire to marry against the will of their parents. Considering that a systematic and unfounded opposition on the part of the parents to the marriage of their daughters causes in most cases their fall, with grave injury to public morals. Considering that it is the unavoidable duty of the Government to watch out for families and morals as the constitutional bases of all civil society, I hereby declare the following:

"1. The Chief of the town, upon receipt of a petition subscribed by a single woman under 23 years of age, requesting the custody of her person in order to contract marriage, shall proceed together with the Commissioner of Justice and the man who has agreed to marry her to her residence and in the presence of the father, or, in his absence, of the mother, shall ask her if she ratifies her petition.

"2. In an affirmative case, he shall place her under the custody of the person whom the parents may designate, and if they should not make any designation, the chief shall entrust her to the care of such resident as he may consider most suitable on account of his upright conduct. During the custody, the parents and the man who has agreed to marry her may only visit the person under custody for short spaces of time, at reasonable hours, and cannot remain with her for any length of time. The man who has agreed to marry her is obliged to support the woman under custody."

When the girl did not have the time to file a legal petition and ran straight to the chief of the town for help, she was placed in the custody of a third person and the parents were called to a hearing, where the couple were made to make known their intention to marry and the parents explained why they opposed the marriage. If the parents agreed to the marriage, the girl was returned to their custody on the condition that she would not be maltreated, and that they would not delay or postpone the marriage. If they didn't do as they promised, they had to pay the costs of the marriage!

One wonders whether matters of the heart should be resolved by legal means, but the Aguinaldo decree shows us a slice of life in those times, and one wishes to find a fully documented case somewhere. Now that would make some fascinating reading.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

In—and out—of touch

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WE LIKE TO THINK THAT THE WHOLE WORLD HAS shrunk to a small village, with everyone becoming accessible through the Internet and information only a few mouse clicks away. But events last Dec. 26 reminded me of how we live more with a paradoxical situation where we can still be so terribly out of touch with each other, and at times when we most need to be in touch.

First, it was on BBC that I first got the news about the fire in an Ormoc City department store set off by firecrackers. I quickly switched to CNN, and then to ANC to try to get more news, but there wasn't that much more information; in fact, all three stations seemed to be using the same reports, with the same words. None of them had video feeds from Ormoc. ANC eventually had a telephone interview with Ormoc's mayor, who said that he hadn't been able to locate the owner of the department store; in fact, he wasn't even sure who the owner was.

Ormoc is a city and isn't exactly isolated, but the news coverage reminds us of how much more work needs to be done to keep Filipinos in touch. We watched, in real time, US planes bombing Baghdad and military tanks rolling into Bangkok as a coup unfolded, yet when local news unfolds, it can take days before we get substantial news.

At times, too, as in the landslides in the Visayas and Bicol, we will never get the full picture of the damage done, of the lives lost. For all the talk about small villages where everyone knows each other, no one seems to figure out just how many people die or disappear in a typhoon or an earthquake.

Tsunami

It was later on Dec. 26, and again on BBC, that I first got news about the earthquake in southern Taiwan, together with a warning that the earthquake set off a one-meter high tsunami that was headed for eastern Philippines.

One meter isn't too high, but it was still enough to get me concerned. Again, I switched to ANC several times but there was nothing about the tsunami even as both CNN and BBC kept saying they would monitor the situation. I went to sleep about midnight, still without news.

The next morning I was relieved to find out that the tsunami didn't materialize. When I checked my e-mail, I did have a message from a friend in California, who forwarded a news bulletin from International SOS Assistance that had the headline: "Tsunami Hits Northern Philippines."

So there are perils, too, about being in touch, especially when it means getting misinformation. I did read in the papers that there had been some panic in some towns in Ilocos and in Bicol, when residents got news about a tsunami threat.

Both ways we lose. Exaggerated information creates rumors and panic, but not having information puts us in harm's way as well. What if a tsunami had indeed built up and reached the Philippines? We've had drills for tsunami and other natural disasters, but without a reliable information system in place, all those drills will be for nothing.

The broadcast media play a particularly important role here and should be putting out periodic updates, with instructions on what to do. Perhaps the cell phone companies can pitch in by texting official bulletins from Pagasa or other government agencies, to include warnings not to panic.

Last year, I signed up for a free e-mail alert service based in Britain (www.tropicalstormrisk.com). As early as Nov. 26, I received a bulletin from them saying that there was a 25-percent chance that "Durian" (local name "Reming") would strike the Philippines in about 96 hours. I continued to get daily updates until Nov. 30, when the typhoon finally struck, with each bulletin specifying areas in the Philippines that were going to be affected. We can and should tap into international networks for information.

Low-speed hi-speed

Now, the next problem is getting those bulletins, and that ties into the quality of our Internet access. I've just about had it with so-called hi-speed Internet in the Philippines. I pay P3,000 a month for a DSL connection through PLDT that's down half of the time I try to connect. The times that I do get a connection, it crawls at snail's pace. Many of my friends have given up on PLDT and switched to other providers, but I'm still hoping against hope that PLDT will improve.

Because of the difficulties with PLDT's DSL, I got one of those WeRoam wireless PCMCIA cards from Smart, stupidly forgetting Smart and PLDT are one and the same. WeRoam cards are actually modems that dial a cell phone number and connect to Smart's satellites. Again, it's been purgatory trying to get good connections, although in fairness, I have to say the connections are more reliable, but they also tend to plod along.

What do I do when both DSL and WeRoam fail? I go back to old-fashioned dial-up networking. It works, and sometimes I think it's actually faster than the so-called high-speed connections.

Last year, during trips to Thailand and Vietnam, I had high-speed Internet connections in three-star hotels and they worked beautifully. There's more to all this business of being in touch than being alerted to potential natural disasters. Eventually, as international businesses look around the different countries for investment opportunities, they're going to compare the reliability of Internet connections in different countries. We'll lose points there, sliding down a few more notches from our already low ratings.

Ghosts

Ghosts in the 21st century—and in the US Embassy? The INQUIRER quoted Fr. James Reuter, who has been visiting Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith at the embassy, as saying that Smith and his three other co-accused in the Nicole rape case as well as the guards were complaining of "ghosts" in the room where they were being held in custody. It was amusing thinking about these brave Marines being so spooked, but never fear, Father Reuter has duly blessed the room.

Meanwhile, we natives should probably be more in touch with reality and think about exorcising other more real ghosts. When Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol says on television that we had no choice but to turn over Smith to the US Embassy because "we are still economically dependent on America," he revives our fears of old ghosts. It was this fear that dominated right after the World War II, when the Americans not too subtly threatened to withhold financial aid if we didn't extend special commercial privileges to them. With the country in ruins, we gave in.

The ghosts were revived again in 1991 when we last negotiated with the Americans on their military bases. In the end, we said no to the bases, a way of exorcising the ghosts of colonialism. Alas, we then agreed to the Visiting Forces Agreement, and the latest turn of developments with Smith's custody show how the ghosts of the past continue to haunt us. Is that being in touch, or out of touch?

Salvage victims dumped in upper-class village

LAST DEC. 21, 2006, THERE WAS AN ITEM in the Metro section of the INQUIRER about "3 bodies found dumped near a Quezon City church." History does repeat itself. Since the 1990s, the open canals of that street have been a favorite dumping ground for salvage victims.

I know because I live there.

No, this is not a blighted urban slum. It's actually around the corner from the street named after the Quezon City mayor's departed wife, Betty Go Belmonte, and just a stone's throw away from Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.'s clubhouse. However, outside the tall walls and the fortified gates of the *burgis*, the powers of darkness rule with impunity. Signs warning passersby to beware of snatchers are posted every few meters. Even the postulants and novices of the many religious houses in this old genteel community are not spared.

Below are my household's encounters with criminality since we moved here in 1994:

1994—A visitor's car parked outside my gate stripped of its sound system in just 15 minutes.

1998—An electric meter stolen.

2001—A houseboy beaten up by toughies as he turned the corner into Betty Go Belmonte Street.

2002—An electric meter stolen.

2003—My house broken into; a personal computer and other household effects stolen.

2004—Men in a car on Betty Go Belmonte Street point a gun at my children's friends as they walk to our house from E. Rodriguez Avenue just to scare them.

2004—Squatters on Bougainvillea corner Betty Go Belmonte lob empty bottles at my children's friends as they walk to Balete Drive.

2005—A water meter stolen.

2005—An electric cable on my street stolen.

Through the years, I have complained, in writing and by phone, to the barangay and all the way up to the mayor's office. I ask that the green park lights (heretofore unused) lining the street be kept lit to deter the criminally minded, or that street lights be added. I ask that sidewalks be placed over the canals, not merely to prevent them from being used as grave sites for the lumpen misbegotten, but also to prevent dengue-carrying mosquitos from breeding.

In August 2005, after another round of letter-writing, the city officer in charge for public order and safety, Manny Sabalza, simply dismissed my complaints with a curt no-can-do. No explanation given. No one from the mayor's office ever had the courtesy to acknowledge my letters. Passing through the proverbial needle's eye is probably easier than getting to the mayor himself. His old house is just a few blocks away, but forget about being neighborly: I gave my letter to his staff there and, despite several follow-up calls, that was the last I heard of it.

My father, who served this government faithfully for over 50 years, left this old house to me. As real estate, it should be close to prime, but not if the city government had changed the zonal classification from residential to no man's land, where neither the restless souls of the savaged victims of vigilante justice nor the good-hearted postulants and innocent schoolchildren can walk in peace.

—NAME WITHHELD ON REQUEST,
Barangay Mariana, Quezon City

Living in the shadow of radio frequency radiation

IN DOÑA PETRONA SUBDIVISION, BARANGAY Pasong Tamo, Quezon City where I live, a cell-site tower is being constructed among our homes. I would like to ask the city government, the Department of Transportation and Communication, the Department of Health, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and other government agencies concerned why cell site towers are being allowed to be built inside residential subdivisions.

There have been no long-term medical studies done on the effects of radio frequency radiation (RFR) that cell sites emit. Cell phones and cell sites that power their signals are relatively new inventions, and there is no way to tell what effects RFR from such installations will have on a person after 30 or 40 years of exposure.

The homeowners in our subdivision have launched a petition to stop the construction of the cell site, and we are determined to use every lawful means to block it. We appeal to concerned government agencies to help us in our campaign.

There are expectant mothers and many children in our subdivision. Once this cell site tower is completed, these children will be living under its shadow and the radiation it emits for decades to come.

—SEAN H. DADO,
16-B Lilim St.,
Doña Petrona Subd.,
Barangay Pasong Tamo, QC

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

When a cataclysmic event occurs

FEATURE

Anne

WHEN A CATACLYSMIC EVENT occurs, such as the tsunami in Asia or the hurricane in the United States, people struggle in many ways. Those directly affected reel, of course, with the loss of loved ones and the physical damage and destruction. Those not directly affected struggle in another way.

How could a good God allow such a thing? Did God will the event? Did God allow the event? Why would God will something so destructive, and on its face, hurtful?

Many people made comments in the aftermath of the tsunami:

"A good God does not will suffering for His people."

"My God would not do such a thing."

"Why is God picking on poor and innocent people?"

The God we know, the God we follow, the God of Scripture, Whom we believe to be the only God, is merciful, compassionate and loving. This premise is based on many things that we believe as truths.

God has carved us in the palm of His hand. Imagine the intimacy of creating something so personally. How precious this makes us in His eyes.

Intimate attention

God has numbered the hairs on our heads. Again, the intimacy of God's attention to us is lovingly apparent in this truth.

He pledges to take care of us. When Jesus made this statement He clearly directed it to all people, which would necessarily include the victims of the tsunami and hurricane and every other disaster.

Jesus said: "I go to prepare a place for you, so that where I am, you might also be." Here He is saying that He does not want to be without us, ever. He has gone ahead to prepare a personal and loving reward, a home for each of us. This is stupendous news, a truth worthy of constant rejoicing.

Yes, God loves His children and Jesus came, not to condemn or destroy, but to save. The evidence of His love is everywhere. It is seen in our families, the progress in our souls, His direction in our decisions, His forgiveness, His tolerance, His mercy, His patience and, in a huge way, in the Sacraments of our Church. Jesus has not abandoned us, hoping for the best. Rather He has set up a plan whereby we use our time on earth to move always closer to Him, growing in holiness and understanding of things divine.

The reality of sin in no way detracts from the perfection of God's plan. God knew sin would be an issue and His plan was developed accordingly.

"A good God does not will suffering for His people." This is just not true. God willed suffering for His only Son and there are times when our good God wills suffering for us, His people. Jesus was sent as the model for all humanity. God most certainly willed that Jesus suffer and die on the cross. Did God do this to be cruel and cold? Did He simply withdraw His protection from our Lord? Clearly not. God willed the death of His Son in an act of sublime mercy and redemption, as part of a bigger plan. He allowed the Crucifixion in order to save us and to give us a perfect example of suffering for others, for a greater purpose.

Picking on the poor?

"Why is God picking on poor and innocent people?" First of all, God's idea of poor people differs radically from ours. Secondly, neither the hurricane nor the tsunami stepped around wealthy or poor people, both affected all in their path. Were they evil in the New Orleans region and as such deserving of tragedy? Did God strike out viciously at the region in Asia because people there were more disobedient than those in Dublin? This is ridiculous. Jesus can find disobedience and rebellion in most places. He also finds great holiness in these places. Jesus did not target innocent, poor people. He seeks to teach us all how to live by the abrupt manner in which our lives can be changed or ended.

"The God I know would not do such a thing." As there is only one God, your God is my God is their God. He's the same God. This is a fundamental truth of our Church and to dispute it is to be in error.

Love and tragedy

The difficulty here is the inability to reconcile our God of love to tragedy. This is understandable but naïve, given all available evidence. The Old Testament is loaded with examples of God sending course corrections. Has He changed?

This statement is reflective of the conflict between two arguments. One is that God is standing back, detached, letting it all happen. The second is that God is actively involved in this period of history. To say that God would not allow the hurricane is silly; He just did. Was God taking a break when the storm advanced in category and changed course? Will God be any less involved in events in the future?

Some say it is just nature. Does God number the hairs on our heads but then abandon us to the violence of nature?

I think we have to accept that whether God willed these events or allowed them is irrelevant. What is relevant is what we take from the experiences and how we allow these events to reshape or confirm our Christian commitment where necessary.

It must be stated that Jesus felt abandoned on the cross. I am quite sure that in their grief and suffering, many people affected by the last few disasters also felt abandoned.

Was Jesus actually abandoned on the cross? Of course not. Not by God and not by those of us who seek to serve Him now.

Did God abandon the people who were taken in those events or those who have been left suffering from those events? Again, not. God is with them and with us and He will be with us in every moment of the future.

God has made it clear that He gives everyone a chance to choose Him at the time of his death. If a person wants Jesus, he will have Him for all eternity.

In Jesus' hands

I saw a small child knocked down by the tsunami in a film clip. I nearly doubled over with the pain of this scene and the reality of that innocent child being taken. I did not bring this to Jesus initially, but struggled, questioning God's mercy in such a reality.

Jesus, who knows us intimately, spoke. He said, "Anne, do you know Me at all?"

I, with the eyes of my soul, gazed into the eyes of our beloved Jesus and saw what I always see when He allows this: His goodness, His compassion, His immeasurable love for us.

Jesus said, "Anne, consider your smallest child. You know how much I love her. If she were in your arms and you looked at Me standing here, and I put My arms out to take her, what would you do?"

I said without hesitation, "I would give her to You, of course."

Jesus said, "Of course. Compared to placing your daughter in My arms, even letting her walk out of the room would seem unacceptably perilous. Do you understand, Anne? Those children are safe with Me. I have them. Do not grieve for the souls I have called home to Me."

After this experience, I did not grieve for any of those taken. I trusted Jesus and His decisions in these matters.

Anne is the chief lay apostle of the New Jesus Christ, the Returning King Movement.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Friday, January 5, 2007

America [illegible] ang maghahanap ng Idol!
ABC
Iba tayo!
American Idol
Season 6
JANUARY 17

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				PBA				Big News	PBA					Sentro	Real Stories		Araw-Araw Premyo Sa Resibo	Simbang Gabi
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Inocente De Ti	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Bart The Vandal Buster	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo (8:15 PM)	E Buzz	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Princess Hours	Bandila	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Alias (Season V)		Lost (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season V)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		The 4400 (Season 2)		Ultimate Guinness World Records							
bTV				NBA Lakers @ Kings					NBA Home Video: Hakeem the Dream		B-ballography: B. Petit	Overtime: Bill Walton	FIBA World Basketball	NBA Fantasy Hoops	NBA Lakers @ Kings				
Cinema One		Pag Ba Pinilig ng Puso				Bakit Kay Tagal Ng Sandali				Carta Alas				War Freak				Burlesk King Daw O	
Cinemax			House Of Secrets (3:45 PM)				Snowboard Academy (5:25 PM)			American Ninja 2: The Confrontation				The Chronicles Of Riddick				Superstition	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		The Closer		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Profiler		City Confidential		Law and Order		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Without A Trace		The Unit	
Discovery Channel		Extreme Engineering		Power Zone		How Do They Do It	Mean Machines	Beyond Tomorrow		Rides		American Chopper		Best of Discovery 2006	Mean Machines			Crime Night	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Shuriken School	Lilo & Stitch	Power Hour		Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Emperor's New School	America's Funniest Home Video	Buzz On Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		English Premier League Highlights		Extreme Programming Sports Max 2006/07		Women's Pro Billiards '06		Great American Events '06		ESPN Great Outdoor Games				Sportscenter Asia	Classic Boxing Ali V. Frazier		Classic Boxing Marciano vs Walcott		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Veronica Mars Season 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Everwood Season 2		Beach Girls		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Degeneres Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Makita Ka Lang Muli	Kapuso Movie Festival				Ghost Fighter	Jewel In The Palace		24 Oras	Captain Barbell	Atlantika	StarStruck: The Next Level	Bakekang	A Rosy Life (9:15 PM)		Bubble Gang		Saksi	
Hallmark Channel		Missing		Hunger Point				McLeod's Daughters VI		Family Law III		ER 1		Midsomer Murders: Straw Women				Trust	
HBO		Around The Bend			Contact					Nadine				Psycho				Twilight Zone The Movie	
Hero TV	Di-Gata Defenders	Sunny Pig	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Saiyuki Reload	Naruto	Monkey Turn	Gundam Seed Destiny	Full Metal Panic	Galaxy Angels	Voltes V Evolution	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Astroboy	Three-Eyed One	Naruto	Raijin-Oh	Di-Gata Defenders	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	New Life Shopping Network		Japan Video Topics/ Amis		Japan Video Topics/ Amis		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Amis	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Karera Sports TV	
JackTV		Back Track				Sweat	X-Play	Heat		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hates Chris	Family Guy	American Dad	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Primetime Glick	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Design Remix	30 Minute Meals	Sweet Dreams	Rachel Ray		Smart Solutions	DIY Jewelry Making	Food 911	Boy Meets Grill	Martha		Clean House		Rachel Ray		Isaac		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure
MTV Philippines					Boiling Points	My Own						MTV Diyes		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV News			
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXlog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXlog
National Geographic	Monkey Business	Violent Earth: Tsunami		In the Womb: Animals				Top 5 - Animals Like Us: Adoption		National Geographic Specials		WOW! Hunter Hunted S2 Outback Attack		Violent Earth: Catastrophe (Eruption at Pinatubo)		Boys' Toys Machines of War: Cruise Missile		Boys' Toys Super Tanker	
NBN					Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Teledyaryo W/ Ray Landa & Angelique Lazo		GSIS Member's Hour		Tinig Ng Bayan		Teledyaryo Final Edition		World Pool Championship					
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubunyag		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Asian Anime Fest: Avatar The Legend of Aang/ Kappa Mikey		SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Catscratch	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Dark Oracle	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Pasaway Na Multo				Putol-Putol Na Langit				Hiwaga Ng Panday				Ilusyon				Di Mapigil Ang Init
Qtv	Pawnshop No. 8	Samurai X	Hikaru No Go	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle	Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene	Extranatural
RPN 9	TV Shopping	Mundo	Popeye & Son	Chinese Movie	Mr. Fighting	RPN Aksyon Balita		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	NCIS		CSI: Miami		Without A Trace		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kalokohan		Shepherds Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports	Golf Today									Sagupaan						Sportsdesk			
Star Movies	Air Force Two			Being Julia (4:05 PM)				Hard [illegible] Justice (5:50 PM)			Flubber (7:25 PM)			Flight Of The Phoenix				Bloodsuckers	
Star World	Two And A Half Men	The Bold & The Beautiful	General Hospital		Desire Table For Three		Arrested Development	The Simpsons	Friends	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		Third Watch		Desire Table For Three		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXlog	Superman The Animated Series	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	7th Heaven	Charmed (8:15 PM)		Ghost Whisperer (9:15 PM)		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		MYXlog
UnTV				KNC Show	Kakampi Mo Ang Batas		Kaka at Ciara Kuagapay Nyo		Public Hearing	Make My Day		Ang Dating Daan (8:15 PM)							

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Baguio shuts down parking operations

BAGUIO CITY—THE CITY GOVERNMENT HAS shut down the operations of a private parking firm, which has accused most of its officials of abuse before Malacañang.

The first administrative order issued by acting Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. this year directed employees to close the office of Jadewell Parking Systems Corp. because it no longer has a business permit.

"We are not targeting any business entity by releasing Administrative Order 001-07," Bautista said.

"But since Jadewell does not have any business permit anymore because the contract and the ordinance that allowed them to operate no longer exists, we were therefore constrained to shut them down," he said.

Members of the local police's Special Weapons and Tactics (Swat) team accompanied policemen to enforce Bautista's order. Police teams were sent to the firm's office because law enforcers anticipated resistance from Jadewell president Rogelio Tan and his employees.

But Tan was not around. His employees accepted a copy of the administrative order and left the firm's office located inside a Burnham Park lot.

Tan had complained to Malacañang that Bautista and the council abused their authority when they ignored a pending case before the Supreme Court, and terminated his 12-year contract to manage and operate on street parking here.

A similar complaint Tan filed last year led to the suspension of Mayor Braulio Yaranon.

Yaranon was unable to complete his remaining term in office because his first administrative order in 2004 discouraged motorists from paying parking fees imposed by Jadewell.

But Bautista said no plan has been instituted regarding parking operations in the city or Jadewell's 20 automated parking meters that now belong to the government.

"We may as well ban parking from [downtown streets like Session Road] to regulate traffic flow, instead of making motorists pay," he said.

The city government will have to amend a traffic ordinance, which took effect when the council nullified the Jadewell ordinance, he said. The 1994 traffic ordinance still requires motorists to pay parking fees.

"But I honestly do not know what to do about the parking meters which no one even used," Bautista said.

The meters operate by deducting credits from swipe cards that motorists are supposed to buy from Jadewell. An audit report, however, indicated that few motorists bought these cards. Jadewell profits relied on parking attendants in the last five years, the report said.

Local officials said the city could re-install the meters around barangays where heavy traffic requires regulated parking.

"Each meter costs more than P100,000 and we cannot just throw them away. Maybe we can sell them," said an official.

Jadewell apparently lobbied for Malacañang to interfere in the parking issue and succeeded.

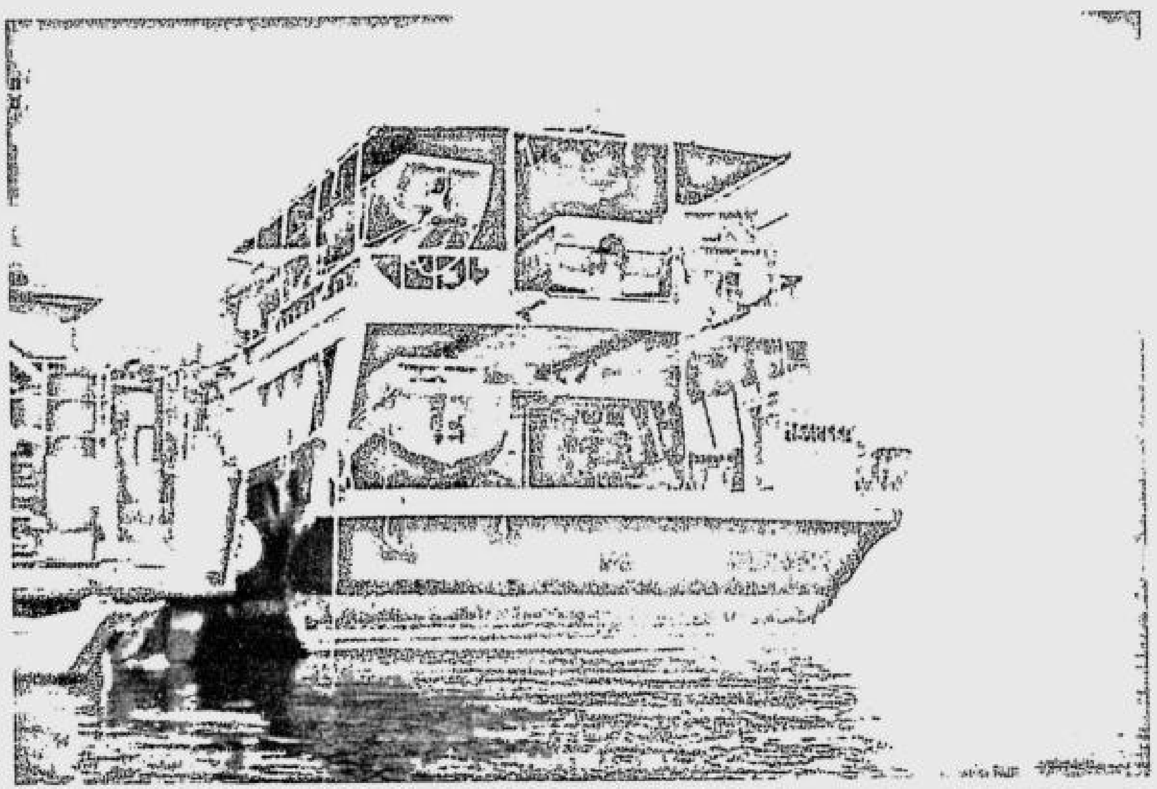
Deputy Executive Secretary Manuel Gaite, of the Office of the President, sent city officials a Dec. 5 directive requiring them to explain their actions following a Nov. 13 complaint filed by Rogelio and Norma Tan, Jadewell's owners.

It did not appear that President Macapagal-Arroyo had been apprised about the issue when she hosted dinner for local officials on Dec. 26, Bautista said.

"We did not raise it to her anyway, out of delicadeza, but [Ms Arroyo] kept assuring us that she will support all our actions," he said.

It was not clear whether Gaite's directive had the knowledge of Ms Arroyo or if she approved of it. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

ARMM losing ₱1B a year to illegal fishing



A TYPICAL Chinese fishing vessel that enters Philippine fishing waters at will. ARMM officials said vessels like this, and those of local fishing companies, intrude into the region's waters. ORY TAN/CONTRIBUTOR

COTABATO CITY—THE RICH fishery resource of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is losing over a billion pesos yearly from illegal fishers operating with the protection of government officials.

Alejandre Ampatuan, Regional Ports Management Authority (RPMA) manager, said the yearly loss of more than a billion pesos was the estimate announced last year by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in Manila.

This prompted ARMM Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan to issue Executive Order 16 on Nov. 14, creating an inter-agency regional monitoring control and surveillance system to ensure the proper collection of port, anchorage, wharfage fees, duties and other charges due to the government.

The EO, based on Section 24 of the Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act (An Act Providing for an Aquatic and Fisheries Code of ARMM), aims to achieve food security through proper management and use of the region's water resources and limit fishery access "exclusively to Filipinos, preferably ARMM residents."

Even prior to the creation of ARMM in 1989, local and foreign fishing vessels have been exploring the Sulu and Celebes Seas just off Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, three of the six provinces comprising ARMM.

"These fishermen had deprived the government of revenues," said Damian Apelo, another ranking RPMA official.

"It's about time we enforce the law and see to it that taxes, duties and other charges due to the government are collected," Apelo said.

Enterprising officials in government are the ones benefiting from ARMM's fishing industry and other available resources but not the regional government, he said.

Apelo cited the case of the region's telecommunications system, saying, "ARMM has more than 3,000 communication towers put up, but the regional government gets nothing. Manila gets it (revenues)."

"We have been deprived of our own resources in terms of revenue-generation," said Apelo, whose expertise in ports management earned for ARMM's Port Polloc in Parang, Shariff Kabunsuan an accreditation from the International Maritime Organization. Two other accredited ports are in Cebu and Iligan.

Costal residents of Tawi-Tawi and Sulu have reported sightings of foreign vessels believed to poaching off the provinces' waters.

"Almost daily we see two, three or more fishing boats at the bay area of Tawi-Tawi," complained Sidarling Barangay Chair Manap Arabani of Languyan town.

Ampatuan said this is where the task force, created by EO16, should come in. Its members are from the Navy, the Coast Guard, the BFAR, the police, the Maritime Industry Authority, the National Telecommunications Commission, the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation and the Office of the Regional Governor.

Ampatuan said it was very unlikely for the regional ports authority, mandated to collect fees on all kinds of commercial and trading vessels within its territorial control, to be accused of hostage-taking for a half-a-million-peso ransom.

"This is ridiculous and (the incident) needs to be investigated," said Ampatuan.

Ampatuan said Malacañang should know the truth about the Philippine Navy's hasty linking of RPMA members of Tawi-Tawi in the alleged hostage-taking of 50 fishermen and demanding P500,000 for their release early this week.

Ports personnel of Tawi-Tawi were performing their mandated task to impose charges on several fishing boats anchored at bay when Navy gunboats arrived, he said.

Two Navotas-based fishing boats, operated by the Irma Fishing and Trading Inc., were among those held by ports authority for non-payment of dues.

"They are now in disarray because of the existing law. Ever since, they've been doing this illegal activity," Ampatuan added. *Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

Belgium vows more aid for Mindanao peace

DAVAO CITY—THE BELGIAN government said it would pour more funds to Mindanao once a peace agreement between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is in place.

Belgian Ambassador to the Philippines Gregoire Vardakis told reporters during a recent visit here that only a final peace agreement would have a lasting effect on Mindanao.

He said that giving financial assistance to war-stricken areas could help "reach a peace agreement which will help make the people think about development and make them economists themselves."

"We are supportive of both the MILF and the government with financial offers meant to help implement the peace process," Vardakis said.

He said the pledge for more funds—under the Mindanao Trust Fund (MTF)—"would make them realize that they are much better off doing things than fighting."

The MTF was set up by countries—including Belgium—supportive of the peace agreement with the MILF.

The World Bank has so far committed $50 million to the MTF.

Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief peace negotiator, said the guerrillas were also looking forward to a final peace agreement with the government.

"This year is a make or break for the government and MILF," Iqbal said. *Jeffrey Tupas and Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

3 more victims in Bauang road crash die

DAGUPAN CITY—THREE MORE passengers of the jeep that collided with a truck in Bauang, La Union, on Wednesday have died, bringing to 12 the fatalities in that accident.

Arnel Marino, 18, and Manilyn Sapitula, 19, all of Barangay Beckel in La Trinidad, Benguet, died while undergoing treatment at the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center (ITRMC) in San Fernando City on Wednesday night, Supt. Pedro Ubaldo, Bauang police chief, said.

Ubaldo said the third victim, Hazel Antonio, 18, died while she was being taken to Baguio City at 2 p.m. also on Wednesday. Antonio was not included in the initial fatality count because her death was immediately reported to the police.

Police said the 12 injured passengers of the jeep were transferred to the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center on Wednesday.

The victims' jeep smashed into a trailer truck at 4 a.m. while they were on their way home to Benguet after a beach party in a Bauang resort.

Ubaldo, quoting the victims' parents, said the victims went caroling during the Christmas season to raise money for a celebration before classes resumed.

"But they told their parents they were just going to nearby Itogon town, not to Bauang, for a swimming party," he said.

Police have filed a case of reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide, multiple physical injuries and damage to property against the truck driver, Andres Placido (not Placido Valencia as earlier reported).

But the parents of the victims had been informed about the investigation report that suggested their children might have caused the accident, said La Trinidad Mayor Nestor Fongwan.

"They have accepted that their children may be at fault. They were drunk. There were bottles of beer and liquor inside the jeep," Fongwan said.

He said it was unlikely for the town government to prolong an investigation.

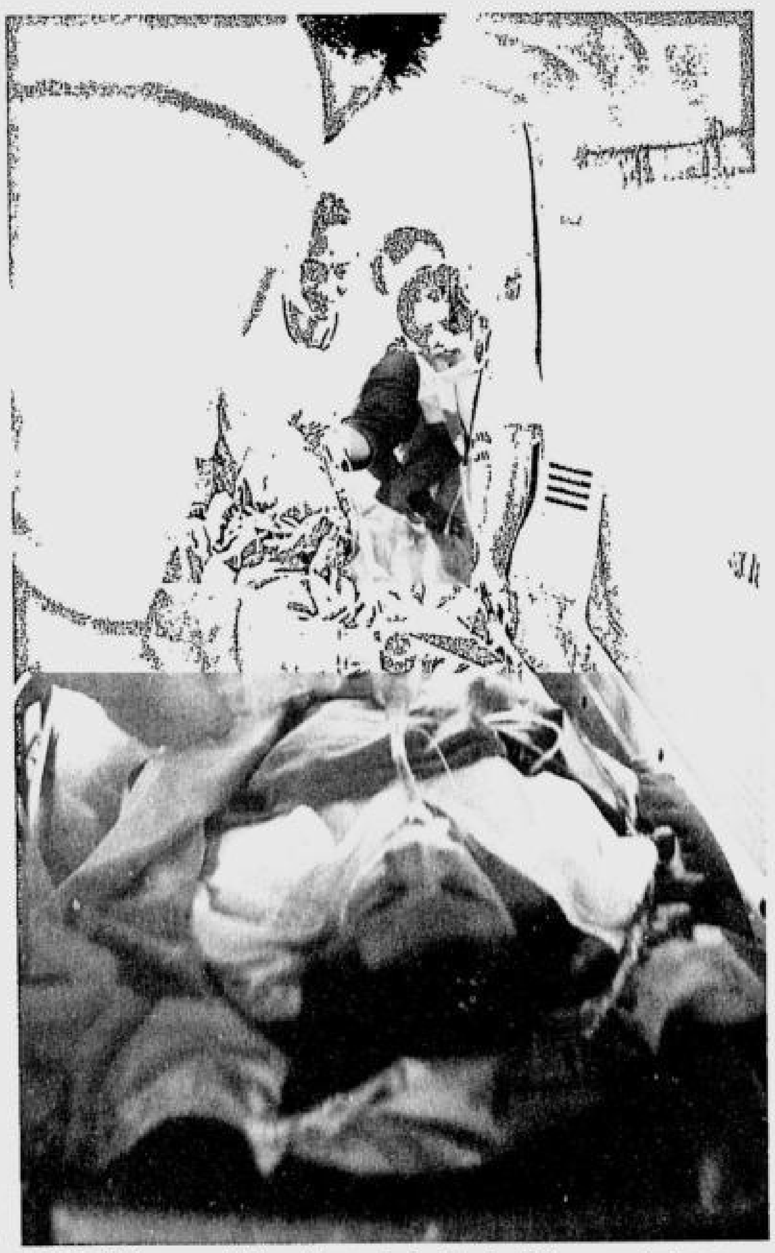
"Keeping [the survivors out of danger] is now my top priority but we need to raise funds. I already sought help from Hedcor (Hydroelectric Development Corp.) and other firms operating in Benguet," he said.

He said he asked the Presidential Management Staff for help "because we are looking at P100,000 to sustain the surgery and medicine these teenagers now require."

Fongwan, who chairs the Benguet Mayors' League, sent six ambulances from La Trinidad and neighboring Tuba town to fetch the victims in San Fernando City.

He also released P100,000 to cover the victims' hospital expenses in La Union.

He said there were issues raised about transporting the injured victims safely. "But the La Union hospital initiated and authorized the transfer because it lacked the surgical and emergency facilities to treat them," he said. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes and Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*



EIGHTEEN-year-old Hazel Antonio is wheeled into an ambulance shortly after the jeep that she and several others were riding slammed into a trailer truck in Bauang, La Union. Hazel died in a hospital hours after this picture was taken.
TOOTS SOBERANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Talks taking shape between Negros execs, NDF leaders

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT of Negros Occidental responded positively to overtures made by communist guerrillas in the province to talk peace, paving the way for what could be the first localized negotiations between government authorities and guerrilla leaders.

Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon yesterday announced that he was creating a five-member panel to represent the province in exploratory talks with local leaders of the National Democratic Front.

Frank Fernandez, priest-turned-head of the NDF-Communist Party of the Philippines in Negros, earlier announced his willingness to dialogue with Marañon to explore avenues of "cooperation in the interest of the masses."

Fernandez, in a recorded message Tuesday, said the dialogue would not constitute localized peace talks, as "it will just be a simple exchange of ideas."

Marañon said the five-man panel he was creating will report directly to him.

Communist panel

He also said he expected Fernandez to create his own panel to immediately start talks, discuss specific topics and set ground rules as a first step.

"I will announce the members of the provincial government's panel simultaneously with Fernandez's announcement of his if an agreement is reached," Marañon said.

Discussions on substantial issues will be made as soon as agreements are finalized and they shall be implemented immediately, he said.

He added that he hoped the exploratory talks would be finished by the end of this month so that all programs and projects could be implemented immediately.

Marañon said he did not want to speculate on claims that Fernandez wants to meet with him to form an anti-Arroyo alliance.

The governor said his only interest in engaging the NDF in a dialogue is to discuss how they can work to accelerate development in the province.

Exciting 2007

In his statement Tuesday, Fernandez said the guerrillas were ready to discuss with the governor their concerns against what he called were the "anti-people criminal activities" of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army, the "fascist crimes" of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police and the operations of a drug syndicate allegedly by a Bacolod businessman.

"We are ready to talk to any government officials or individual officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines-Philippine National Police," said Fernandez, "to explore possible areas of unity and cooperation in the interest of the masses."

Marañon said that, with the CPP-NPA's willingness to engage in a dialogue, "this will be an exciting 2007 and beyond."

"Fernandez can suggest what kind of projects he wants for the countryside. Economic prosperity in the countryside has to be achieved but peace is needed to succeed," the governor said. *Carla Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

All systems go in Cebu, including anti-GMA ...

From page A1

by Asean was originally scheduled for Dec. 11-13 in Cebu, but the Philippine government, citing approaching Typhoon "Seniang," abruptly rescheduled it even as foreign ministers had started to arrive.

The decision to delay the summit surprised many delegates.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen suggested the threat may have been twofold: The typhoon and terrorism. Japanese Trade Minister Akira Amari called the typhoon explanation "extremely puzzling" and said the postponement had undermined the Philippines' credibility.

But the dust settled quickly and, despite initial uncertainty, the Philippines said all delegates had confirmed they would be returning to Cebu for the summit meetings of the 10 Asean countries, plus dialogue partners Australia, China, Japan, India, South Korea and New Zealand.

12th
ASEAN SUMMIT
DELEGATES
CEBU•PHILIPPINES

IT WAS OFF, NOW IT'S ON: The postponed 12th Asean summit last December will push through on Jan. 13. Sixteen Asian heads of state have confirmed their attendance. AP

Leaders confirm attendance

"Everything is set for the summit. All states have confirmed their participation," said Luis Cruz, assistant foreign secretary for Asean affairs.

"Everybody is saying that they are better prepared now in terms of security, traffic and other aspects of the preparation with the extra month," said summit spokesperson Victoriano Lecaros. "All systems are go."

Focus on human rights

Military spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said there were no specific terror threats, unlike last month, when the United States, Britain, Australia and Japan issued travel advisories warning that al-Qaida-linked militants might have been in the final stages of planning attacks in the Philippines.

About 5,500 police officers and 3,000 troops will secure the meetings from potential terror attacks and street protests, police said. Rallies only will be allowed in a designated park, far from the Asean meetings.

Reyes said hundreds of activists from Manila will join colleagues in Cebu in protests that will highlight human rights violations, trade liberalization and its effect on poor countries, US military intervention and the war on terror.

They also plan to denounce the government for handing a US Marine convicted of raping a Filipino woman to the US Embassy—a move Ms Arroyo's administration said was necessary to maintain US-Philippine military cooperation.

International human rights groups, including London-based Amnesty International, have expressed concern over the rising number of political killings in the Philippines, where hundreds of left-wing activists have been killed in recent years with only a handful of cases being solved.

Key resolutions

Among key resolutions to be adopted in the Cebu summit is a legally binding Convention on Counterterrorism. Other main topics will focus on economic integration and efforts to draft an Asean charter, in addition to a series of bilateral issues, Lecaros said.

A draft of the accord calls on the nations to improve cross-border cooperation to prevent attacks, share intelligence and training, curb terror financing and rehabilitate convicted terrorists to prevent repeat attacks.

High-profile advisers from a so-called Eminent Persons Group, led by former President Fidel V. Ramos, will submit recommendations to Asean leaders for the radical changes in a long-overdue charter they are planning to draft.

Ramos said earlier that changes include an easing of a fundamental Asean policy—which forbids member countries from interfering in each other's domestic affairs—to allow sanctions when members fail to comply with the group's edicts.

Also yesterday, the Department of Public Works and Highways announced that national roads damaged by Seniang had been repaired.

DPWH Central Visayas Director Robert Lala said workers were now repainting fences to brighten up faded colors and helping spouses of mayors involved in a beautification project to spruce up areas in convention sites. *With reports from Leila B. Salaverria, AP*

No gov't work, classes on Jan. 12, 15 in 3 Cebu cities

THERE WILL BE NO GOVernment work or classes on Jan. 12 (Friday) and 15 (Monday) in the cities of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu, which will host the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit.

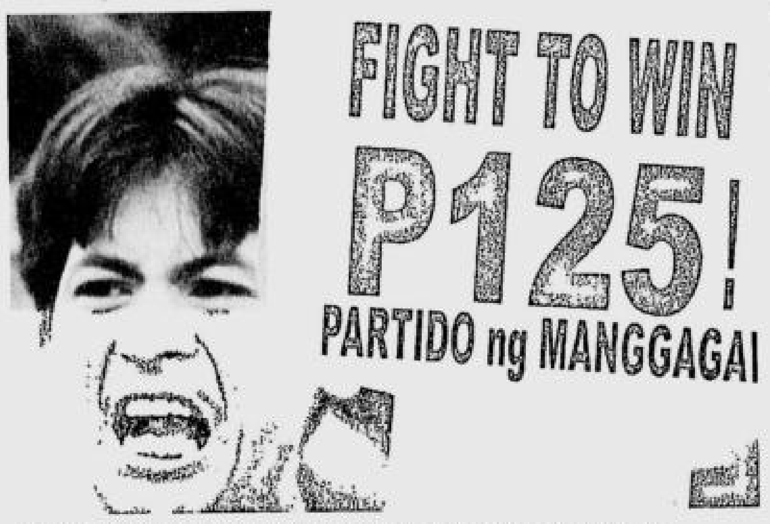
The Palace has declared the two days as special nonworking days in these cities, according to a presidential proclamation issued yesterday, so the people there will be "given full opportunity to participate in this important event."

The proclamation covers government employees, except those required to render emergency, security and other related services, and public and private schools.

Private companies are not covered by the proclamation. *Christine O. Avendaño*

Labor leaders urge Senate to OK ₱125 pay hike

From page A1



ANGRY FACE OF LABOR: Militant groups rally in front of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines office in Makati in support of the passage of the P125 across-the-board wage hike. ERIK ARAZAS

SUMMARY OF CURRENT REGIONAL DAILY MINIMUM WAGE RATES

Non-Agriculture, Agriculture as of December 2006 (In pesos)

REGION	NON-AGRICULTURE	AGRICULTURE	
		Plantation	Non-Plantation
NCR	350.00		
CAR	229.00-235.00	216.00-222.00	216.00-222.00
I	180.00-225.00	195.00	170.00
II	210.00-218.00	198.00-206.00	198.00-206.00
III	227.00-278.00	212.00-248.00	192.00-232.00
IV-A	218.00-287.00	198.00-262.00	178.00-242.00
IV-B	209.00-230.00	183.00-192.00	163.00-172.00
V	177.00-220.00	188.00-198.00	168.00-178.00
VI	199.00-222.00	185.00-203.00	180.00
VII	200.00-241.00	180.00-223.00	180.00-223.00
VIII	220.00	201.00	201.00
IX	215.00	190.00	170.00
X	219.00-234.00	207.00-222.00	207.00-222.00
XI	238.00-240.00	228.00-230.00	207.00-209.00
XII	224.50	208.00	205.00
XIII	214.00	204.00	184.00
ARMM	200.00	200.00	200.00

was P1,005, five times the minimum wage of P200 in the region.

The living wage is the amount of income needed to provide for the requirements of a family of six to enable it to maintain a decent standard of living.

The living wage refers to the total income of the employed members of the family, according to the NWPC.

Family wage

In contrast, Pope John Paul II defined "family wage" in his encyclical on human work ("Laborem Excercens") as "a single salary given to the head of the family for his work, sufficient for the needs of the family without the other spouse having to take up gainful employment outside the home."

Mata said APL believed that the House leadership approved the measure so the Senate would take the blame if it failed to act on the measure, a view shared by Elmer Labog of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno.

"So we're asking the Senate, pass the version of the House. It's not that perfect. In view of the little time left for the 13th Congress, it would be good if you leave us something sensible. Let's not split hairs on the amount; let's not debate the contents. Just pass it," Mata said.

"So, if I can make a suggestion, 'call their bluff and everybody will be happy,'" he said.

Senate version

Opposition Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, chair of the investigating committee, said he was inclined to approve a legislated wage hike, but he preferred the Senate version, which provides a lower, but more reasonable P100 wage increase.

"If I will not act on this bill, they will put the blame again on the Senate. I'd rather put the blame on Mrs. Arroyo," he told reporters after the hearing, referring to the President.

Estrada said he was more inclined to adopt Senate Bill No. 2030, which he authored and which provides a P100 daily across-the-board wage hike in one go, but would amend it so it would be implemented over a three-year, four-year or five-year period.

He, however, expected the Senate version to face tough opposition from some of his colleagues in the Senate, including Sen. Franklin Drilon, a former labor secretary. "It will face rough sailing here," he said.

DOLE against legislated hike

Even if the wage measure gets ratified by both chambers of Congress, labor groups expected President Macapagal-Arroyo to veto it because the government appeared more inclined to back the big businessmen.

At the hearing, Labor Undersecretary Romeo Lagman echoed the labor department's opposition to the proposed legislated wage increase, saying this would take its toll on small enterprises.

"If it becomes a law, who can withstand it? Only the big companies. What will happen to the micro- small- and medium-enterprises? About 99.6 percent of total establishments belong to SMEs," he said, echoing Labor Secretary Arturo Brion's statements.

Calibrated

The department, he said, had maintained that the better approach to increasing or adjusting the wage of workers was through the "calibrated response."

"In other words, we recognize the regional, socio-economic differences in the region, the standards of living. I believe you understand that the standard of living in [Metro Manila] is much higher than [in the rest of the country] ... Let's look at the regional differences in cost of living and the capacity of employers to pay," Lagman said.

Labog said he lamented that the Department of Labor and Employment appeared to be taking the side of the employer, instead of mediating between employers and workers.

Formal sector

Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr., president of the Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop), for his part, argued that the legislated wage increase, which covers the lowest-ranking worker to the president of a company, would only benefit the 5.7 million people working in the "formal sector."

"The benefit that will be given to the the 5.7 million people, assuming that it will be implemented, will cost about P418 billion a year, and this is not based on productivity, and will be passed on to the consumers, which is the rest of the population," he said.

By the rest of the working population, he meant those self-employed such as vendors, farmers and *balikbayans*.

"And we assume there'll be job losses because of this. Many companies who can't afford this will probably have to retrench or close shop, but those who can, will probably be going underground," Ortiz-Luis said.

Ambassador Donald Dee, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, pointed out that increasing wages was not the single biggest solution to an inefficient economy.

"By merely increasing the wages, you're not solving the problem, if your objective is to improve quality of life. May I suggest to the senators to join us in going to the various regions in the country so that you can determine what exactly are the reasons for this inefficient economy. And you will find that one cause is obviously energy cost and then transport cost," Dee said.

He added: "We employers can't be asked to carry the entire burden of the inefficiency of the economy."

Mata said he agreed with the business leaders' argument that increasing wages was not the only solution to the country's labor problems.

Eliminate subcontracting

"What's needed is a holistic and structural approach," he said, even as he proposed that the employers allow the workers to form unions and for the labor department to abolish the regional wage boards in favor of industry wage boards to address concerns about different levels of minimum wages, and to eliminate the policy of contracting and subcontracting.

"That's the solution," he said.

Labog said unfair trade and unfair labor practices, not wage hikes, were causing unemployment.

At the House of Representatives, a militant lawmaker called the labor secretary a "fool" for issuing a warning that the House-approved measure would be "disastrous for labor and employment."

Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano said the Arroyo administration's policy of trade liberalization and monopolies were the ones putting small enterprises out of business.

In Cotabato City, a businesswoman said retrenchments would take place, particularly among SMEs if the wage hike was implemented.

"The timing is bad because business is not so good," said Sandra Basar, president of the Muslim Chamber of Commerce and Industry. *With reports from Jerome Aning and Michael Lim Ubac in Manila and Charlie C. Señase and Judy Quiros, Inquirer Mindanao*

Lea stages Broadway comeback in 'Les Miz'

From page A1

Claude-Michel Schönberg and Herbert Kretzmer have given the character a show-stopping solo song number, "I Dreamed a Dream."

Lea, who is acknowledged as the first Asian actress to portray French gamine Eponine in the Broadway run of "Les Misérables" in 1993, is again the first Asian actress to essay the role of Fantine on Broadway.

"Filipinos Joan Almedilla played Fantine in the national tour of 'Les Miz' in the US and Joanna Ampil on West End (in the United Kingdom). But I may be the first Filipino to play Fantine on Broadway," Lea told the INQUIRER yesterday via e-mail and text messages.

Eponine at 22

"When my agent (Jim Wilhelm) first e-mailed me about the role, I told myself: 'Wow!' It was not a role that I was exactly eyeing. But after I was offered the part, I realized: Yah, maybe it's something that I could do. It's a beautiful and wonderful part," she said.

Lea admitted that she never envisioned herself playing Fantine, "because when I first did the show (as ingénue Eponine), I was only 22."

As a new mother herself, she is more than ripe for challenging mother roles like Fantine. Lea, who will turn 36 on Feb. 22, gave birth to firstborn Nicole Beverly on May 16.

"I'll join the show on March 6," she said.

Rehearsals

According to the US websites, Lea will be replacing Broadway actress Daphne Rubin-Vega (of "Rent" fame) who will be leaving the show on Feb. 18 to join Oscar-winner Philip Seymour Hoffman in the play, "Jack Goes Boating."

While Lea is rehearsing for "Les Miz," ensemble member Nikki Renée Daniels will take over the role of Fantine from Feb. 20 to March 4.

"Mackintosh's representatives made the formal announcement on Jan. 3. They first asked her to play the part when she was eight months pregnant," Ligaya Salonga, Lea's mom, told the INQUIRER in a separate phone interview.

Salonga said she would be accompanying Lea and granddaughter Nicole to the United States.

"Her husband (Robert Chien) will join us for two weeks to help us set up, then he'd have to go back to work. That's why I want to be there with her. She will not survive on her own," Salonga said half in jest.

"She needs all the help she can get! Knowing how passionate she is about her job, she'd give her all to this production. She even told me: 'I don't care if they don't pay me; I'd still do this play!'" she added.

8-month contract

Salonga added that their apartment in New York was just "walking distance from the theater, so Lea will not be that harassed. She's committed to do the play for eight months."

Lea was not a bit worried when the INQUIRER caught up with her yesterday at the mall. She was on her way to keep a spa appointment.

"I am just living my life and enjoying Manila as much as I can before leaving for New York. I know that I need to start preparing for it in a major way when I get to the US," Lea said.

She is scheduled to leave for New York on her birthday, Feb. 22.

"I consider myself fortunate that I have my mom and my husband with me. I am also trying to get our nanny to accompany us. I just have to do my best. This is something new for me. This is my first time to perform on Broadway [with a child], but I'm just hoping for the best. That's all I can do at this point," she said.

Extended run

According to Broadway-World.com and Playbill.com, the new production of "Les Miz" will run at The Broadhurst Theater (235 West 44th Street) in New York and "was extended until at least the summer of 2007 . . . due to strong box-office and enthusiastic audiences."

The websites added that Lea was expected "to stay in the production through the entire period."

"Les Miz" has been running for the past 21 years, according to its official website. The musical premiered at the Barbican Theater in London on Oct. 8, 1985. The US version opened on March 2, 1987, at the Broadway Theater in New York.

Life after Ms Saigon

The US websites reported that Lea was no stranger to Cameron Mackintosh productions.

After topping a worldwide search, Lea made her West End debut in 1989 as Kim, the heroine of "Miss Saigon," for which she won an Olivier Best Actress Award.

Two years later, she reprised the same role in the Broadway run of "Miss Saigon," winning a Tony, as well as Drama Desk and Outer Critics' Circle trophies.

In 1993, she became the first Asian actress to play Eponine in "Les Misérables" on Broadway. She went on to play the same part in the West End and Honolulu productions of "Les Miz."

She also tackled the same role in the 10th anniversary concert of "Les Miz" held at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

4 years ago

The last time Lea appeared on Broadway was in a revival of Rogers and Hammerstein's "Flower Drum Song" in 2002.

In 2005, she made her grand debut at Carnegie Hall in a "sold-out concert."

Lea also provided her singing voice to Disney animated features "Aladdin" and "Mulan." She also appeared on US TV shows "ER" and "As the World Turns" and the TV-movie "Redwood Curtain."

In 2004, she lent her voice to Hayao Miyazaki's animated film, "My Neighbor Totoro," essaying the role of mother to a character voiced by Hollywood child star Dakota Fanning.

Lea earlier told the INQUIRER that she didn't mind playing mother roles. "My being a mom has, in fact, imbued my work a deeper significance. You just attack roles and songs in a different way."

More endangered fish found on Chinese boat

From page A1

were arrested on Dec. 21 at the Tubbataha Reefs National Park.

Napoleon wrasse, or mameng, is an expensive reef fish served in restaurants in Hong Kong and major cities in China.

The suspected poachers have been charged with violation of the country's fisheries and environmental laws, the Tubbataha Management Office (TMO) said yesterday.

The Chinese were subjected to inquest proceedings on New Year's Eve.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) started the inventory of the live fish in the water tanks of the fishing boat Hoi Wan on Jan. 2, according to the TMO. The fish included more than 300 Napoleon wrasse and an assortment of groupers, the TMO said in a dispatch.

Angelique Songco, manager of the TMO, said she was surprised by the BFAR's finding that there were more fish in the basins at the bottom of the fishing boat.

"The estimate of our TMO personnel was actually very far from the actual number of Napoleon wrasse inside the boat," Songco said in a mobile phone interview.

Songco said the TMO initially estimated that there were 300 live mameng, 500 Lapu-lapu (grouper) and 500 red snapper on the Hoi Wan when the TMO intercepted it last month inside the marine park.

She said BFAR inspectors discovered that there were 13 water tanks on the boat.

More than 2,000

As of late Tuesday, Songco said BFAR inspectors had already counted 335 live Napoleon wrasse and 303 Lapu-lapu in three water tanks.

She said counting the fish lasted the entire day.

"Imagine if there are more than 600 fish in the three water tanks, then it's safe to say that there are 200 fishes in each tank. If there are 13 tanks, then there could be more than 2,000 live fish inside the tanks," Songco said.

She said it could take a while before the BFAR could release the endangered fish species back to the sea.

In a separate interview, Malcolm Sarmiento, BFAR director, said he had ordered his staff to finish the inventory yesterday.

He said he too was surprised by the large number of live fish found on the boat.

Release needs court order

Sarmiento, however, said that his staff would not release the fish once they finished the inventory unless they got a court order.

"We cannot release the fish if we do not have a court order. We will be vulnerable to contempt," he said.

Sarmiento said the fish would be used as evidence against the Chinese fishermen.

Once the BFAR gets hold of a court order, it will immediately find an appropriate area where the fish can be released, according to the BFAR director.

He said the release would be witnessed by representatives of environment groups and the court.

Good aeration

The possibility of the fish dying on the boat was remote because the water tanks had good aeration channels, according to the official.

Songco said the Chinese were charged with violation of the Philippine Fisheries Code that penalizes poaching, taking of rare, threatened and endangered species and exportation of the fish.

They were also charged with violation of the National Integrated Protected Areas System and the Philippine Wildlife Resources Conservation Act.

"Inquest proceedings were conducted by Prosecutor Regidor Tulali aboard the Hoi Wan on Dec. 31, 2006, and a commitment order for the detention of the Chinese nationals in the Palawan Provincial Jail was signed by Judge Perfecto Pe on Jan. 1, 2007," Songco said.

Six released on bail

She said that on the same day six of the Chinese fishermen were released on bail and "are now on board the Hoi Wan."

Another case for the violation of Provincial Ordinance No. 819 banning the use of compressors was filed against all the Chinese with the Municipal Circuit Trial Court of Roxas, Palawan.

Sarmiento said his office was not buying the excuse of the Chinese fishermen that they had bought the Napoleon wrasse and that the fish had come from a breeding farm.

No farm for mameng

"There are no breeding farms for this fish species in the Philippines. Nobody can breed it here because we still do not have the technology to do it," he said.

The Convention for the International Trade of Endangered Species prohibits the possession of Napoleon wrasse even if it's for breeding purposes, according to the BFAR official.

The Chinese, apparently, caught the mameng within the Sulu Sea or within the Tubbataha Reefs.

Sarmiento said the fishing gear found on the Hoi Wan clearly indicated that its crew was engaged in fishing.

"Also, the sheer number of crew members arrested only proved that they were on a fishing trip," he said.

Victor Calderon / Tubbataha Management Office

VIC CALDERON/TUBBATAHA MANAGEMENT OFFICE

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Owners or administrators of real properties in Manila are hereby notified that payment of real property taxes for the First Quarter, CY 2007 without penalty, is **on or before March 31, 2007**.

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Sunday,	**January 07, 2007**	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday,	**January 13, 2007**	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
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Saturday,	**January 20, 2007**	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday,	**January 21, 2007**	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
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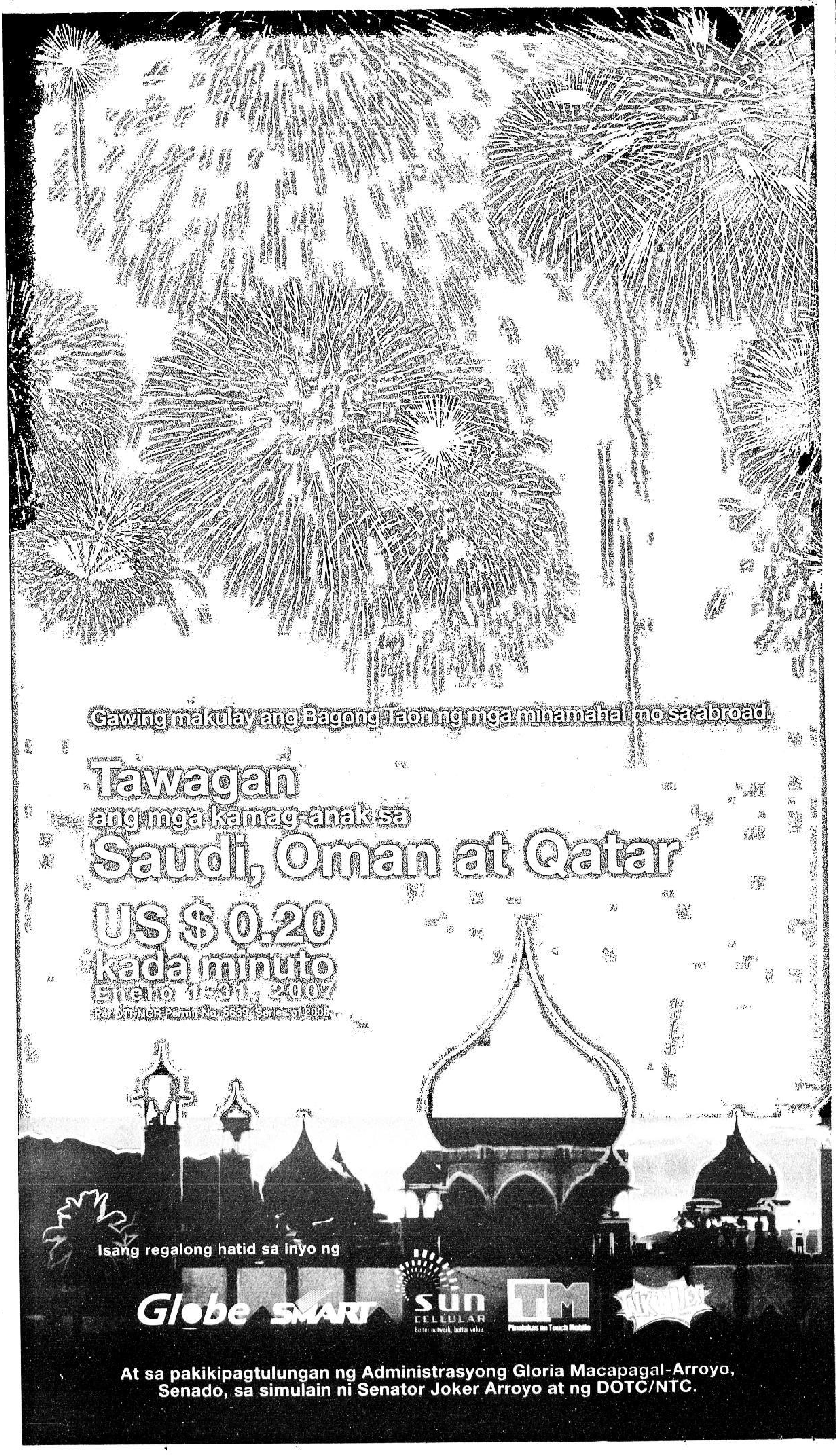

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PGH to increase rates next month

OR fee union's prime concern

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PHILIPPINE GENERAL HOSPITAL, THE "teaching hospital" of the University of the Philippines system, is set to increase rates this year, raising concern from its own employees.

The PGH employees union said the planned increases, particularly those involving operating room and patient identification cards, could be too much for charity patients.

Union president Jossel Ebesate said a December announcement bared the price of the "blue card," a patient's identification card, would rise from P7 to P15. Patients would also pay P1,500 in operating room (OR) fee, through the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. , the government health insurance program, said Ebesate, a nurse who is secretary general of the Alliance of Health Workers. He said the rate adjustment was scheduled to take effect next month.

Ebesate said the union was concerned primarily about the new fee for the operating room. Dr. Michael Tee, PGH spokesperson, said yesterday the adjustments were carefully studied by the hospital's rates committee that included union members. The committee meets Jan. 9 to discuss the various concerns. "At the PGH, everything is democratic," he added. Ebesate said even if the new OR fee was to be paid by Philhealth, many charity patients were not covered by it. This means they will have to pay the P1,500, "no small amount for indigent patients," he said.

PHILIPPINE GENERAL HOSPITAL

FEES for the precious "blue cards" issued by the government-owned Philippine General Hospital to indigent patients are also expected to be raised under the institution's proposed rate adjustment scheme. INQUIRER PHOTO

Landowners told: Beware of smoothies

By Margaux C. Ortiz

VICTIMS OF THIS SCAM HAD NO idea that a "special" type of growth enzymes purportedly used for fishponds would cost them a lot of money.

An official of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday warned the public against a gang notorious for duping landowners of millions of pesos through an elaborate scheme.

NBI National Capital Region (NCR) Director Ruel Lasala said the group, which he called Preservatives (or Enzymes) Gang, had been targeting landowners and businessmen in Metro Manila and other provinces in the country.

"The suspects usually choose affluent or upper middle-class victims selling their property," Lasala told the INQUIRER.

The warning came after a businessman, who requested anonymity, sought the NBI's assistance yesterday after he lost close to P500,000 to the group.

The businessman was selling 11 hectares of land in the outskirts of Metro Manila when members of the group approached him last month, Lasala said. The gang was always accompanied by a foreign-looking individual who posed as a Japanese or Indian businessman, or an Arabian sheikh.

After gaining their trust, the group would interest their victims into making profits out of the sale of "special" growth enzymes. The group and their accomplices would later disappear when the victim contacts them for future deals, Lasala said.

Homeowners along railway moving soon

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THOUSANDS OF RAILWAY dwellers in Muntinlupa City may be able to move to better homes this year, if excavation work in the sprawling New Bilibid Prisons pushes through next week.

Four contractors are set to begin work in 50 hectares of the 416-hectare "disposable" land in the compound next week.

This was announced by the Urban Poor Affairs Office (UPAO) yesterday after a meeting with officials of the National Housing Authority and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

The "site development," including excavation and drilling for drainage, paving of roads, installation of power lines and water pipelines, is expected to be completed in July.

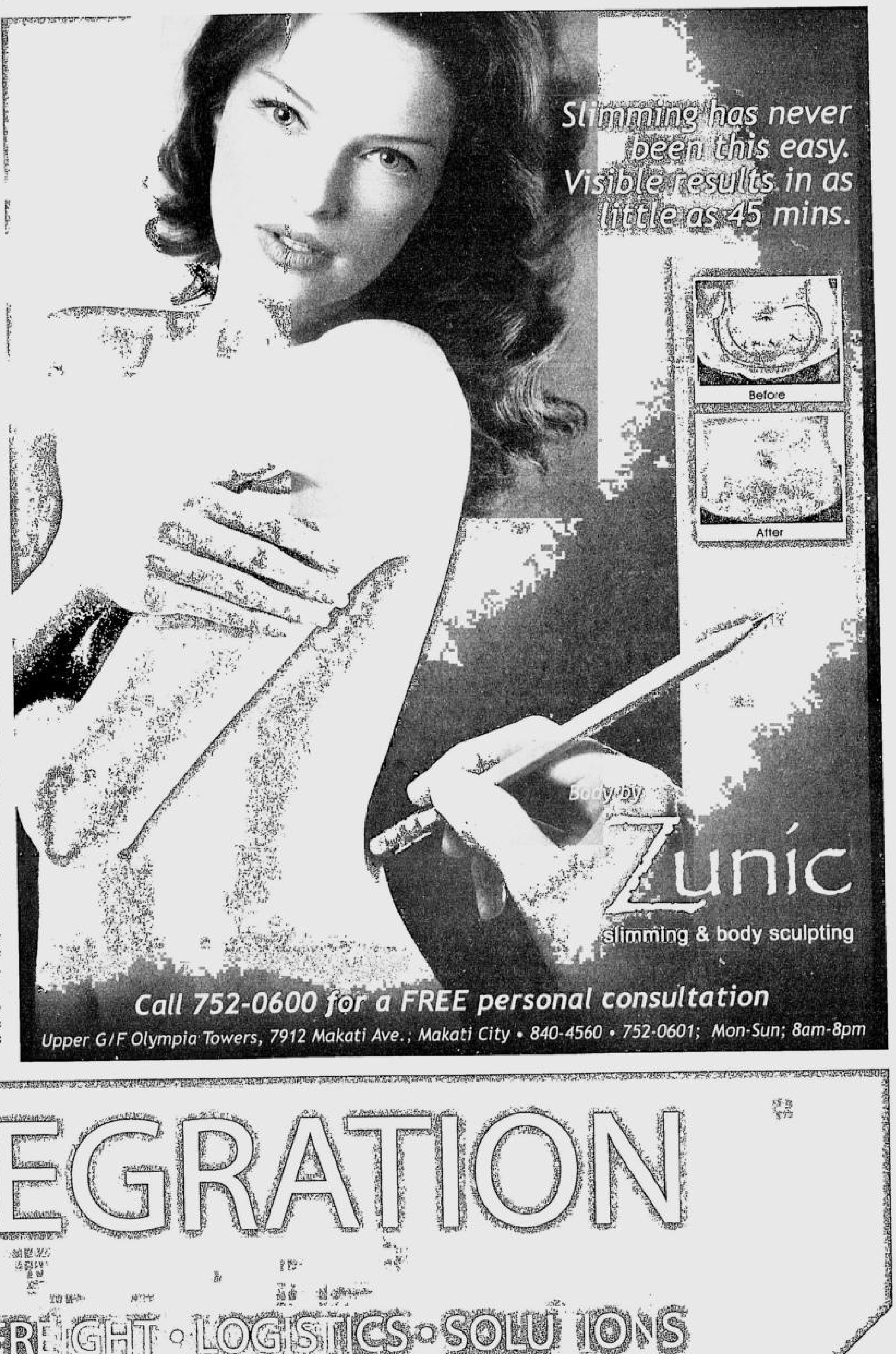
The construction of low-cost houses for the 8,000 families displaced by the South Rail project would immediately follow, said UPAO head Noel Cardona.

The three- and four-story buildings will consist of 32-sq-m units costing P100,000 that beneficiaries would pay in 25 years.

Cardona said the local government was trying to get into partnerships with nongovernment groups like Gawad Kalinga and Habitat for Humanity to lessen the cost of construction.

The houses, he added, would occupy less than 70 percent of the 50 hectares as some parts of the land were unsuitable for housing.

The local government has also allocated a small portion of the land for recreational facilities and business establishments.



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Reward to be shared by informants in Ballocillo case

METROBRIEFS

Cops keep busy for Quiapo festivity next week

THE MANILA Police District (MPD) has conducted saturation drives within the Quiapo district to rid the area of criminal elements in preparation for the Black Nazarene's 400th year anniversary next week. According to MPD acting director Chief Supt. Danilo Abarzosa , the anticrime operations would lessen or eliminate possible crimes that may happen in Quiapo on the day of procession. The streets covered by the operation include Palanca, Oroquieta, Elizondo and Globo de Oro. Abarzosa said the image of the Black Nazarene would be brought to the Quirino Grandstand at 5 p.m. on Jan. 8. He added that a vigil, candle-lighting ceremony and fireworks display would follow at the grandstand. After the 6 a.m. Mass on Jan. 9, the image of the Black Nazarene will be brought to the Quiapo Church through a procession that will commence at 12 noon. Abarzosa said the procession, participated by a crowd that is expected to reach 200,000, would then pass through Quiapo's smaller streets. The MPD will also set an advance command post at the Quirino Grandstand and Plaza Miranda, Abarzosa added. "We will deploy 300 uniformed personnel, 100 traffic enforcers and 100 civilian traffic officers on the day of the feast," the MPD chief said. Six bomb-sniffing dogs, four Special Weapons and Tactics teams, two groups of paramedics from the fire department, two fire trucks as well as ambulance vehicles and 50 plainclothes policemen would be assigned in different venues. "There will also be at least five public assistance centers in Quiapo's streets," Abarzosa added.

Margaux C. Ortiz and Joba Botana

Caloocan 'blooms' with posters galore

HOPING to get ahead of their counterparts, posters, banners and streamers disguised as support of various advocacies and greetings during the holidays have sprouted in the major streets of Caloocan City days before the election period officially begins on Jan. 15. And gauging from the number of different names printed on the streamers declaring support for projects, events or any endeavor, elections in the city like the past election years would still be among those closely watched. The most prominent of all are the posters belonging to RJ Echiverri, a member of the city council, urging residents to "Go out, register and vote." The posters are plastered on walls and posts of buildings near the Caloocan City College along Samson Road. The INQUIRER tried to get Echiverri's comment but he could not be reached. Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos, however, said recently he did not consider streamers, banners, and posters in public places as a form of electioneering at this time. He said that only after the person shown in flyers files for his certificate of candidacy is when materials are classified as "election-related."

Nancy C. Carvajal

By Jocelyn R. Uy

INFORMANTS, POLICE AND INVESTIgation units who helped in the arrest of the alleged killer of a lawyer working for the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) and his son will get P200,000, or 16 percent of the P1.2 million reward money.

This was announced yesterday by the Southern Police District. Informants would get the money on Monday, sharing the initial P200,000 bounty with elements of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Parañaque and Dasmariñas Police, said SPD director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales in a phone interview.

The informants helped police track down the alleged gunman of Nestor Ballocillo and his son Benedict.

Rosales said his friends from various organizations, whom he called the "Friends of SPD," and NCRPO Director Reynaldo Varilla raised P50,000 each. Mayor Florencio Bernabe pledged another P100,000.

The OSG has yet to release the P1 million reward it promised. A police official, who requested anonymity, said the agency would only give the amount when the mastermind in the killing of the Ballocillos was arrested.

But Rosales denied this, saying the money would be released as soon as funds were available. He vowed that the police would continue its hunt for the mastermind of the twin murders.

Follow up operations

Meanwhile, Parañaque police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles told the INQUIRER yesterday they would use the reward money to fund follow up operations on the case.

Investigators arrested last week Christopher Garcia, alias Benjamin Bermudez, 27, the alleged gunman after informants told them they overheard Garcia bragging during a drinking session that he shot the Ballocillos.

Dasmariñas police chief Supt. Mario Reyes earlier said Garcia was facing a string of murder and robbery cases in Cavite. The suspect was arrested at the Philippine General Hospital where he was being treated for gunshot wounds he sustained in a robbery in Parañaque on Dec. 20.

Right track

"I am positive that we are on the right track," Rosales said. He expressed confidence that Garcia would lead them to the other suspects in the killing as psychics had corroborated their investigation, he added.

Docs face charges in baby's death

By DJ Yap

THE MOTHER OF A BABY GIRL who died while undergoing surgery at the Philippine Heart Center in Quezon City has charged her daughter's doctors with negligence.

Arlice Aquino, of Pandacan, Manila, filed a criminal complaint Wednesday against doctors Eden Latosa, Jaime Nuevo and Florian Nuevo in the Quezon City prosecutor's office.

In her affidavit, Aquino accused the doctors of reckless imprudence that allegedly led to complications and the eventual death of her 1-year-old daughter Samantha Louise.

The baby girl, suffering from a congenital heart disease, was admitted to the Heart Center on April 23 after three days of fever, cough and colds.

On April 26, she underwent surgery but died during the operation.

Bruises

The distraught mother said she found black and blue bruises on the girl's body, particularly in the pelvic area, after the failed procedure.

The cause of death listed in the death certificate was listed as myocardial failure as a consequence of her congenital heart defect.

Unconvinced, Aquino sought the help of the National Bureau of Investigation, which later conducted an autopsy on the girl's body, she said.

Bleeding

According to the medico-legal report of Dr. Roberto Rey San Diego, bleeding was one of the "major and most serious complications" of the procedure performed on Samantha Louise.

"The operator on the instant case should have foreseen the possibilities of the occurrence of this complication," San Diego wrote in his conclusion.

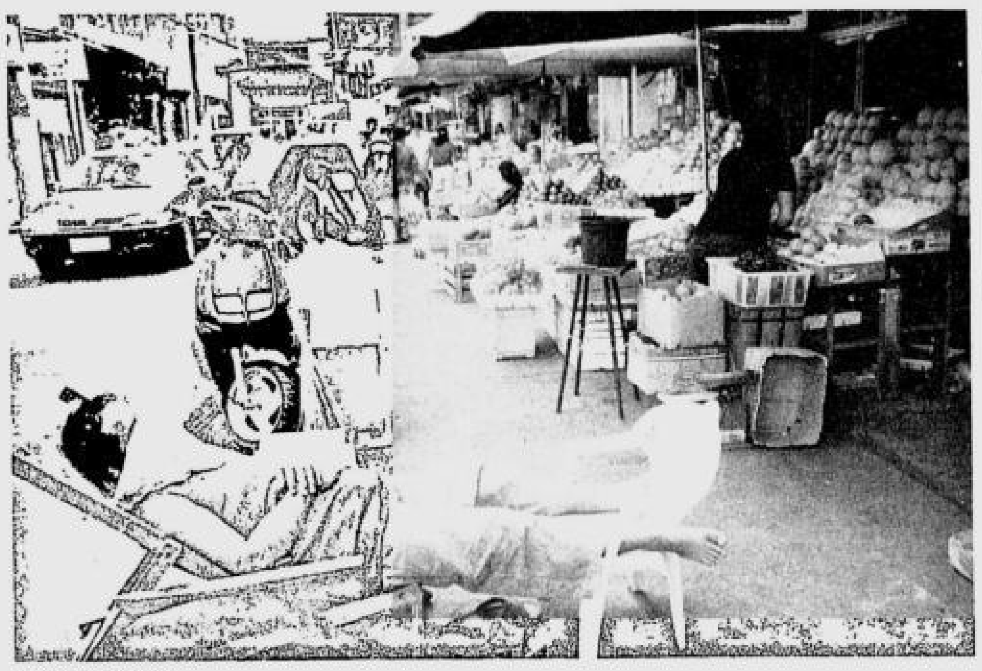
"Failure to do so would be a violation of the doctrine of foreseeability, which is applied in malpractice cases," he continued.

San Diego added that the patient's death could have been averted "if only there was meticulous preparation on the patient on the possible development of the complication."

Complications

"True, the development of complications cannot be totally prevented but lessening the effect of such complications ... would definitely assuage the impact on the patient," he said.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Latosa and the Nuevos through several phone calls to their clinic at the Heart Center but the calls were not immediately returned.



SLOW DAY
A fruit vendor in Binondo takes a much-deserved nap after a hectic holiday season.
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Police nab colleague for mauling, shooting pedestrian in Cainta

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

INSTEAD OF ARRESTING CRIMINALS, PO1 Jose Refina Jr. ended up being apprehended by his own colleagues after he allegedly mauled and shot in the leg a man in Cainta, Rizal last week.

Cainta police chief Supt. Joel Garcia told the INQUIRER Refina was arrested on Wednesday morning while he was walking on Ortigas Avenue Extension.

The policeman was caught after the shooting incident involving Jonathan Combo, 18, on Dec. 27, 2006.

The alleged reason: The suspect and the victim accidentally bumped into each other while they were walking on Bonifacio Avenue in Barangay Sto. Domingo.

Refina allegedly walked away after the incident.

But since he was wearing a police jacket and because barkers and night club workers in the area knew him, policemen caught up with him after seven days.

Garcia said Refina had told him he just defended himself from the complainant.

"(Refina) said the (Combo) tried to grab his service firearm so he just defended himself from the attack," Garcia said, quoting the suspect, who was assigned at the Jala Jala police station, also in Rizal province.

The complainant had alleged that the suspect was drunk during the incident.

Columnist to face three libel cases in Cebu

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE CITY PROSECUTOR OF Cebu has found probable cause to indict Philippine Daily Inquirer columnist Ramon Tulfo for three counts of libel before the Cebu Regional Trial Court.

City Prosecutor Nicholas Sellon said yesterday he approved the resolution of investigating prosecutor Victor Laborte, dated Dec. 19, that found basis for the libel case filed by former Cebu customs district collector Lourdes Mangaoang.

Sellon said he recommended a P10,000 bail bond for each count of libel.

Mangaoang filed the cases against Tulfo last year because of a series of articles about the former customs official in his column "On Target" in the INQUIRER.

She asked for P10 million in damages.

Sellon said the prosecutor's office would have to wait 10 days from the time Tulfo received the resolution before filing the cases in court to give the columnist a chance to file a motion for reconsideration or a petition for review with the Department of Justice.

The charges would be suspended if Tulfo questioned the prosecutor's resolution and his motion would be acted on first, the prosecutor said.

In her libel charge, Mangaoang said Tulfo maligned her by insinuating she had an "amorous relationship" with Finance Secretary Margarito Teves.

Tulfo, in his columns dated March 23, March 30 and April 4, 2006, allegedly also questioned Mangaoang's competence as district collector and asked why her transfer to the Port of Iloilo was aborted.

The columnist allegedly also insinuated that Mangaoang had a backer "that even a presidential order can be violated," Laborte noted in his resolution.

In his counter-affidavit, Tulfo admitted he wrote all the statements in his column, according to Laborte.

The prosecutor said Tulfo, in his defense, said Mangaoang was a public servant and his columns were imbued with public interest.

In his six-page resolution, Laborte, however, gave merit to Mangaoang's complaint that Tulfo's columns contained libelous and malicious imputations against her.

Sellon said Tulfo's defense of privilege communication was a matter for the court to decide and rule on.

"It's the court that will ultimately determine if the article was indeed privileged or not. Our office is tasked to determine if there was probable cause," Laborte said.

The prosecutor also gave weight to Mangaoang's allegations that Tulfo attempted to extort money from her. Through his close associate, Tulfo allegedly called the complainant to set a meeting, which she refused.

Mangaoang's affidavit claimed that Tulfo's close associate called her twice in March to schedule a meeting with the columnist supposedly to help her project a good image.

When she turned down the offer, Mangaoang claimed Tulfo attacked her on March 23 and in subsequent columns on March 30 and April 4 last year.

Laborte, in his resolution, found Tulfo's columns to be "laced with malice" and not intended to uphold the public's interest because the columnist allegedly never refuted Mangaoang's allegations that he was attempting to extort money from her.

Contacted for comment, Tulfo said the filing of the charges in Cebu was "harassment pure and simple."

DID YOU KNOW

LACSON Street in Manila was named after Arsenio H. Lacson, former mayor of the city. Born on Dec. 26, 1912, he became an amateur boxer, soccer player, guerrilla during the Japanese occupation, lawyer, professor and newspaper columnist. Lacson was elected to Congress in 1949 and became mayor in 1952. He was the first Manila mayor to serve three terms. He died on April 15, 1962.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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Scientists may have uncovered 400-year-old Medici family murder

ROME—SCIENTISTS IN ITALY believe they have uncovered a murder—400 years after it is thought to have taken place.

Historians have long suspected that Francesco de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and his second wife, Bianca Cappello, did not die of malaria but were poisoned—by Francesco's brother, Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici, who was vying for the dukedom.

For four centuries that theory remained just that—a theory.

But following a study into the affair, forensic and toxicology experts at the University of Florence believe they have uncovered clear evidence of murder by poisoning.

Francesco's "was a lethal dose, but progressive, and the symptoms were compatible with arsenic poisoning" Donatella Lippi, a professor of history of medicine and a coauthor of the study, published in the British Medical Journal on Dec. 21, told The Associated Press.

As rulers, art connoisseurs and financiers of kings, the Medici flourished for centuries in the rough and tumble alliances of old Europe, ruling first the city of Florence then Tuscany from 1430 to 1737.

Francesco ruled from 1574 until his death Oct. 17, 1587, at age 46, 11 days after first taking to his bed and a few hours before his wife.

Scientists Francesco Mari, Aldo Polettini, Elisabetta Bertol and Lippi collected and tested beard hairs from Francesco's grave in the Medici chapels in Florence, as well as other remains found in clay jars in a crypt about 20 km west of Florence. Bianca's grave was never found.

Tests on the beard hairs proved inconclusive—but samples of Francesco's liver taken from the crypt showed levels of arsenic that were "significantly higher" than those normally found in humans, the scientists said.

But if Francesco was murdered, who did it?

Experts say that, though there is no proof, Ferdinando was the only person with an obvious motive. He wanted his brother's dukedom and his behavior at the time was suspicious—for example, he took charge of his brother's illness, compiling the medical bulletins and minimizing the gravity of Francesco's illness in dispatches to the Holy See.

After their deaths, he ordered immediate autopsies—an unusual step which could have been designed to cover up evidence.

"These important findings, in addition to the historical data collected on the events before and after the almost simultaneous deaths of the grand-ducal couple, allow us to rewrite the historical reconstruction of those events," the study said.

The only surprising aspect is that Francesco—who had an interest in alchemy and chemistry and was suspected of having poisoned his first wife—could have been poisoned so easily and so quickly, said Richard J. Hamilton, a medical toxicologist at Drexel University, Philadelphia. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Belarus slaps duty on Russian oil exports

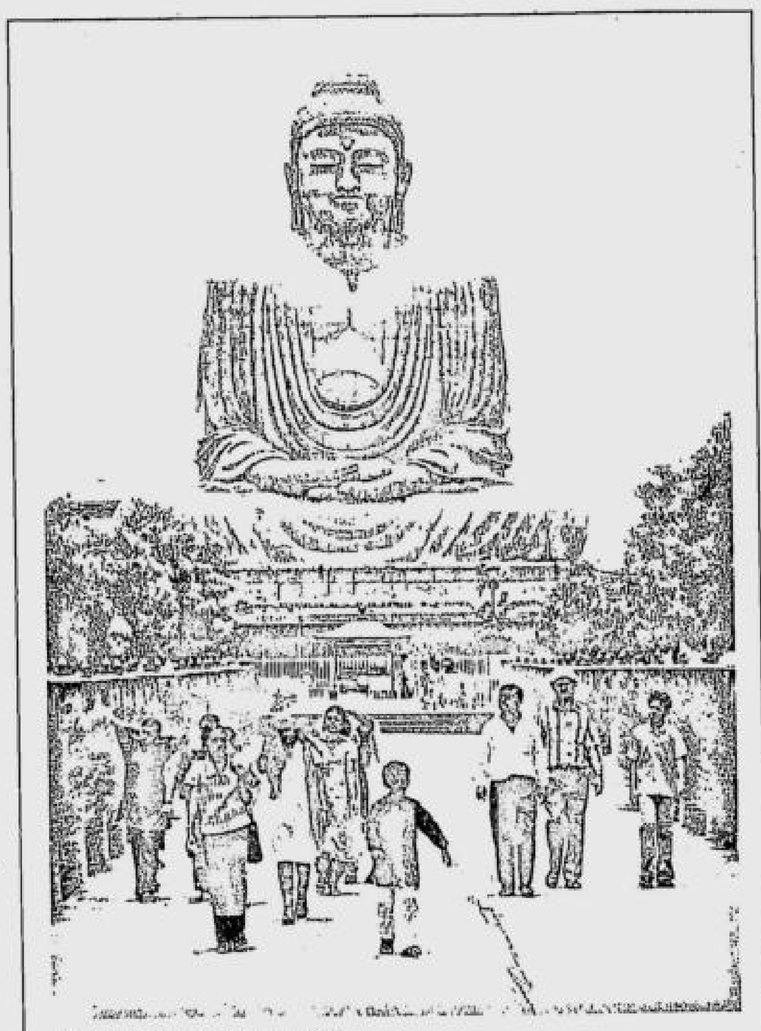
MINSK—Belarus slapped big new charges on Russian oil crossing its territory on Wednesday, causing headaches for refiners in northern Europe and further unravelling Belarus' once cordial ties with the Kremlin. Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko—described by Washington as Europe's last dictator—imposed transit duty of $45 per ton on Russian oil in retaliation for Moscow cutting subsidies on energy supplies to Belarus. One million barrels of oil a day, or about a fifth of Russian exports, pass through Belarus. Most of that crude goes to refiners in Poland and Germany. Market watchers said the transit duty would not affect world oil prices or cause shortages but it was likely to cause short-term disruption to the supply chain as refiners in Poland and Germany look for cheaper alternative supplies of crude. *Reuters*

British teen youngest to sail Atlantic alone

LONDON—A 14-year-old British schoolboy has become the youngest person to sail single-handed across the North Atlantic Ocean after a voyage of more than six weeks, his spokesperson said here Wednesday. Michael Perham battled shark-infested waters and huge waves since taking three weeks off school and setting out from the tiny British dependent territory of Gibraltar, off southern Spain, on Nov. 18. "It feels absolutely fantastic being back on dry land, absolutely brilliant," he told BBC television from the Caribbean island of Antigua, where his arrival was greeted by a steel band and a welcoming party of boats. "It was a really fantastic trip. I enjoyed almost every minute of it," he said following the 3,500-nautical-mile voyage using the trade winds that have carried sailors from Europe past Africa to the Americas for centuries. *AFP*

Bush intel chief resigns to become Rice's deputy

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush's top intelligence official, John Negroponte, is resigning to become Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's deputy, a senior official said Wednesday. News of Negroponte's resignation came just days before Bush is expected to announce his new strategy for Iraq, where Negroponte served as ambassador for 10 months before taking over as the first US Director of National Intelligence in April 2005. Although he said in interviews earlier this year that he would remain the intelligence czar until Bush leaves office in January 2008, Negroponte, 67, has agreed to return to his State Department roots as deputy secretary of state, the senior State Department official said. *AFP*



HOT DESTINATIONS

TOURISTS and devotees walk in front of the 80-foot Buddha statue at Bodhgaya, India, in this July 5, 2006, photo. Destinations in Asia and river cruises in Europe are among the hottest new trends in travel as 2007 begins. AP

Jakarta seeks missing plane with foreign help

POLEWALI, INDONESIA—US and Singapore air force planes were Thursday set to join a massive air, land and sea search for a missing Indonesian passenger jet with 102 people on board.

The Adam Air Boeing 737-400, with 96 passengers and six crew, vanished from radar screens Monday halfway through a flight from Surabaya, on central Java island, to Manado, on the northeast tip of Sulawesi island.

Reports by officials Tuesday that the wreckage and some survivors had been found on a remote jungle-covered mountain near Polewali in the west turned out to be false after rescue teams combed the area.

The search was now concentrating on the sea off Majene, 40 kilometers west of Polewali, as well as areas inland based on coordinates from distress signals from the plane and its last known position.

Bad weather and the rugged landscape of the mountainous island were hampering the search, officials said.

An Indonesian air force plane taking part in the search was forced by bad weather conditions to make an emergency landing Wednesday, the Antara news agency said.

Four navy warships carrying divers were using sonar to try to detect any plane wreckage under water, Lieutenant Colonel Toni Syaiful, Eastern Fleet Command spokesperson, said.

"The four ships will search the waters the Adam Air plane was supposed to have crossed in its journey," he told Antara.

One of the ships was diverted from the search for survivors of a ferry accident. The boat sank off Java last week.

A Singapore air force plane with 27 personnel landed Wednesday evening.

US air force aircraft were expected Thursday, armed forces commander Djoko Suyanto said.

On the ground, rescue teams have been scouring the forests and hills of West Sulawesi up to the Tana Toraja regency, about 75 km northeast of Polewali.

"For today (Thursday) our search will concentrate on the Tana Toraja area," said lawmaker Abdul Hadi Jamal, one of the leaders of the parliamentary transport and communications commission, who was at Polewali to take part in search.

"One of the last (distress) signals detected was from the Rantepao area in Tana Toraja regency. We will scour the area by air as by land it is much more difficult," he told ElShinta radio.

"We will fly there using a helicopter so we can go really low to look for a crash site." Rescue teams were facing problems in the search of the rugged area.

"It is mainly two problems. One is the geophysical challenges of the landscape in these areas and another problem is the weak satellite system with proper GPS (global positioning system) here," Jamal said.

"A functional satellite navigation system is really needed in these conditions. It is a challenge to receive radio signals in this region," he said.

Aircraft accidents are not uncommon in Indonesia, a vast archipelago nation stretching over 5,000 km. *AFP*

Special force called in to fight bloody Rio crime wave

RIO DE JANEIRO—NEW RIO DE Janeiro Governor Sergio Cabral said Wednesday an elite police unit would soon take the lead in fighting a bloody crime wave in the state that has killed 24 people in a week.

Cabral, 69, said the National Security Force would first patrol the state border to prevent arms, drug smuggling and criminals from fleeing, but that by mid-year it would also deploy in the state capital Rio de Janeiro.

Besides an alarming rise in gang activity in the city, heavily armed gunmen lately have begun systematically attacking police stations, hospitals and even public transport, leaving 24 civilians, police and gang members killed in the past seven days.

In the worst of what some politicians believe is a politically motivated killing spree, gang members last Thursday torched a bus, killing seven passengers.

The violence raised concern of authorities since it coincided with New Year's Eve celebrations that typically draw hundreds of thousands of tourists to the city and its famed Copacabana and Ipanema beaches.

Cabral, who was sworn in on Monday, said he decided to "gradually" deploy the special police force in the state after an "extremely urgent" meeting Wednesday with federal, military and state security officials.

Made up of 7,700 elite police officers from some of Brazil's 26 states, the National Security Force was formed in August 2004 by President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva to deal with emergency situations. It has since been deployed three times in the states of Espirito Santo and Mato Grosso do Sul.

Cabral also announced that very shortly he would request Lula send the armed forces into Rio de Janeiro to back local police and military units in fighting crime in the city slums.

Lula, who was also sworn in Monday for his second mandate, branded the surge in violence in Rio as "terrorism" and said he was considering proposing new laws to increase punishment for criminals. *AFP*

High-speed trains for Taiwan

TAIPEI, TAIWAN—TAIWAN'S long-delayed high-speed rail system geared up Thursday to welcome its first paying passengers amid lingering safety concerns and embarrassing ticketing glitches.

The 480 billion New Taiwan dollar ($15 billion; euro11.4 billion) system, which begins limited service Friday, will cut rail travel time between Taipei and the southern city of Kaohsiung by more than half, from four hours to 90 minutes.

First conceived of more than 20 years ago, the system represents a colossal effort to provide state of the art transportation solutions to Taiwan's 23 million people, while saving energy and preserving the environment.

But in the final countdown to launch, the problems that have dogged it for more than a decade were still apparent.

Half-price tickets for the limited service period, which is expected to last at least ten days, went on sale Tuesday amid widespread technical glitches.

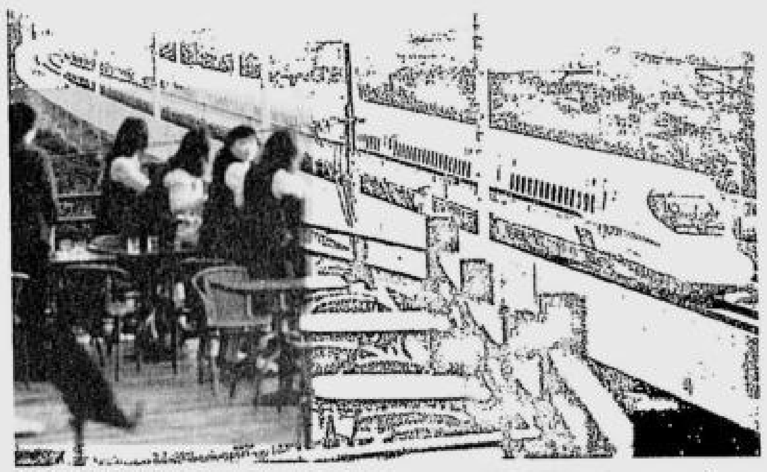
Taiwanese cable TV stations showed angry ticket buyers complaining about being unable to use credit cards, or receiving the wrong change from ticket machines.

Chair Nita Ing of the Taiwan High Speed Rail Corp., the operator of the new system, apologized for the setback.

"We are not satisfied with the way things are going," she said. "But the situation will improve day by day."

The ticketing glitches followed criticism about the project's numerous delays and questions about its safety standards.

Construction of the system began in 2000 with an original launch date of October 2005, but a delay in the completion of the project's core electrical systems forced a postponement to October 2006. *AP*



TAIWAN'S much-anticipated bullet train will finally go in to service on Jan. 5, linking the island's north and south and dramatically altering its economic landscape. AFP

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Iraq defers hanging of Saddam aides

BAGHDAD—IRAQ POSTponed hanging two of Saddam Hussein's henchmen Thursday amid international pressure following the ousted dictator's bungled and much criticised hanging.

Meanwhile, two justice ministry guards are being held for questioning in connection with the secret filming of Saddam's final moments.

Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikrit, Saddam's half brother and former intelligence chief and Awad Ahmed al-Bandar, the head of the revolutionary court, were to have been hanged on Thursday after the end of the Eid al-Adha holiday.

But a senior official from Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's office, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the execution was postponed "due to international pressure."

Baha al-Araji, an influential Shiite lawmaker from radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's parliamentary bloc, said: "I am sure it will be done on Sunday." On Wednesday, UN spokesperson Michele Montas said United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was opposed to the death penalty.

"The Secretary General strongly believes in the wisdom of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person," she said.

"He fully endorses the call made today by (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) Louise Arbour for restraint by the government of Iraq in the execution of the death sentences imposed by the Iraqi high tribunal," she added.

The US military has expressed concern over the manner in which Saddam was hanged, saying it would "have done things differently," and Britain has condemned the leaking of the video.

On Nov. 5, Saddam, Barzan and Bandar were found guilty of ordering the judicial murder 148 Shiite men and boys from the village Dujail in the 1980s, and sentenced to death for crimes against humanity.

Saddam's execution five days ago has angered members of Iraq's Sunni minority and triggered criticism from observers who felt he was humiliated minutes before put to death.

A top Iraqi official denied defended its conduct.

"Where was the humiliation? The shouting of the crowd?" demanded Iraq's National Security Advisor Mowaffaq al-Rubaie, who was present at the execution, during an interview on CNN.

A grisly unofficial video released after Saddam was hanged showed one of the members of the execution party shouting the name of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, a bitter opponent of Saddam.

The two-and-half minute film shot on a mobile telephone camera has spread like wildfire on the Internet and triggered angry outbursts within the Sunni Arab community of Iraq and from international leaders.

One of those present at the execution could be heard shouting "Muqtada! Muqtada! Muqtada!" at a sneering Saddam, inspiring some observers to compare the execution to a sectarian lynching.

"Basically they were doing their congregational prayers and supplications, and they mentioned at the end of their supplication the name of Muqtada," Rubaie said.

"I can't see where is the humiliation, to be quite honest. Muqtada, Muqtada, Muqtada is not a dirty word, not an obscene word, they were not cursing." Rubaie also explained why the executioners and Iraqi officials danced around Saddam's body after the hanging.

"This is the tradition of the Iraqis—when they do something they dance around the body and they express their feelings," he said.

"What is wrong with that? If that upsets the feelings of some of the Arab nations and Arab rulers, I think: 'The best of luck to them.'

"To the best of my knowledge and belief after I left the scene I was proud of what had happened and it was played by the book, but when the video was released I saw some wrongdoing and this has to be addressed," he said.

Shiite deputy Sami al-Askari, who was also present at Saddam's execution, said two justice ministry guards had been held for questioning.

"Two guards who are employees of the justice ministry have been held, but there are no charges against them yet," he told AFP. *AFP*

أشرفهم كلهم

A JORDANIAN woman holds a picture of Saddam during a protest against his execution, in Amman Jan. 3. REUTERS

From Saddam, a florid farewell to Iraqis

By Marc Santora and John F. Burns

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—IN HIS FINAL days, Saddam Hussein turned to poetry, so often his source of solace in times of difficulty, inspired by his vision of himself as inseparably tied to those he led.

The poem, "Unbind It," is his rallying call to be sounded from the grave.

It is a mixture of defiance and reflection, but no remorse. No mention of the tens of thousands of lives he was responsible for taking. No expression of guilt or sadness or regret.

The poem, flush with florid phrases that were his trademark, begins with what sounds like a paean to the love between himself and his people, who were about to lose him.

Unbind your soul. It is my soul mate and you are my soul's beloved.

No house could have sheltered my heart as you have.

He moves quickly to more aggressive language. He refers to the foreigners who swept him from power and to the Iraqis who rose to rule here in his place.

The enemies forced strangers into our sea

And he who serves them will be made to weep.

Here we unveil our chests to the wolves

And will not tremble before the beast.

The verses were written by Saddam after he was sentenced to death and, according to his relatives, are believed to be his last written words.

A handwritten copy of the poem was passed along by the Iraqi authorities to his family in Tikrit, along with his final will and testament, according to Saddam's cousin Muayed Dhamin al-Hazza.

Al-Hazza read the poem on the telephone, saying he hoped Saddam's farewell would underline the manner in which the execution was carried out.

Iraqi and US officials confirmed that a poem left among Saddam's belongings at the US military detention center was delivered to his family.

In the poem, Saddam praises those who continue to fight for the Iraqi nation and condemns the "wolves" who have brought ruin through their invasion. He portrays himself as a martyr.

His poetry, like his speeches at decisive moments of his dictatorship, was often obscure, highly alliterative and difficult, even for Arabic speakers, to comprehend fully.

Iraqis familiar with his style helped translate his death-cell poem. He is most clear when talking about how he sees himself in light of his impending death.

I sacrifice my soul for you and for our nation

Blood is cheap in hard times.

Saddam had told his official biographer that he cared little what people thought of him when he was alive, but that he hoped to be revered as one of the giants of history—as a Nebuchadnezzar or Saladin—500 years from now. *New York Times news Service*

A CHILD wrapping herself against the cold in Dhaka Jan. 4. REUTERS

Cold spell kills 17 in Bangladesh

DHAKA, BANGLADESH—A cold spell sweeping northern Bangladesh left at least 17 people dead in past three days while dense fog disrupted public transportation in the region near the Himalayan foothills, officials and news reports said Thursday.

The deaths were reported in a region where temperatures dropped to 9 degrees Celsius (48 degrees Fahrenheit), below normal in this tropical, impoverished nation, United News of Bangladesh news agency reported.

Most victims were elderly people and children from poor families, the reports said. Many of the victims suffered from fevers, pneumonia or diarrhea, or died of exposure.

Most Bangladeshi villagers, who live in mud-and-thatch huts and often cannot afford warm clothes, are poorly equipped for colder-than-normal weather.

"In winter, people here die more from cold-related diseases because of malnutrition and lack of timely medical treatment," said Faruk Rahman, a doctor at a state-run hospital in the region.

The temperatures fell below normal since New Year's Day as chilly wind swept the region, shrouded in fog that disrupted traffic, according to the Meteorological Department. *AP*

Gerald Ford laid to rest in Michigan hometown

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN—FORMER US President Gerald R. Ford was laid to rest on the grounds of his presidential museum after eight days of mourning and remembrance that spanned the country, from the California desert to the United States' capital and back to Ford's boyhood home.

The burial service at sunset capped the official mourning for the 38th president, whose casket traveled more than 2,700 miles (4,350 kilometers) before reaching its final stop on a hill overlooking a river at the museum in Ford's hometown.

At a graveside service that included a 21-gun salute and a 21-aircraft flyover, Vice President Dick Cheney presented former first lady Betty Ford with the American flag that was draped over her husband's casket.

Earlier, Ford was remembered as a man not afraid to laugh, make tough decisions or listen to the advice of his independent wife in eulogies delivered during a funeral at the church the couple attended for six decades.

An honor guard carried the casket inside Grace Episcopal Church, where Ford's defense secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, and Ford's successor, former US President Jimmy Carter, recalled his public service.

His widow, Betty, wiped away tears as she sat with the couple's four children and more than 300 dignitaries and family friends, including Cheney and golfing legend Jack Nicklaus.

"He was one of us," Rumsfeld said. "And that made him special and needed in a dark and dangerous hour for our nation."

Rumsfeld, who recently left his post as President George W. Bush's defense secretary, remembered Ford as a courageous and steady leader who healed the nation after Watergate.

Rumsfeld said the military is considering naming a new aircraft carrier after Ford, a Navy veteran of World War II. Later at the Pentagon, the Navy confirmed that it would make an official announcement in a few weeks.

"How fitting it would be that the name Gerald R. Ford will patrol the high seas for decades to come in defense of the nation he loved so much," he said.

Carter described the close personal friendship he and Ford developed over the years.

"I relished his sound advice," Carter said as his wife, Rosalynn, cried. "I want to thank my predecessor for all he did to heal our land."

Ceremonies were held last week in Southern California, near Ford's retirement home. The mourning then shifted to Washington D.C. before his casket was returned for a 17-hour viewing Tuesday night and Wednesday at the museum.

Thousands of flag-waving mourners lined the roads under sunny skies as the motorcade bearing Ford's casket traveled between his presidential museum in downtown Grand Rapids to the church, before returning to the museum.

The viewing had to be extended Wednesday until nearly noon so everyone in line could pay their respects. Some 57,000 mourners waited hours to file past the flag-draped casket during the night. Some stopped and made silent prayers.

During the burial ceremony, people lined the top of a six-story parking garage and a neighboring office tower to watch events at the museum below.

Capt. Bill Roberts, a spokesperson for the Michigan National Guard, which assisted with the Ford events, said Wednesday evening the president's body had not yet been placed in the ground and could not say exactly when it would happen.

Ford represented Grand Rapids in Congress for 25 years.

Ford, who became president after Richard Nixon resigned, died Dec. 26 at his home in Rancho Mirage, California. He was 93. *AP*

THE CASKET of former US President Gerald R. Ford is carried from the sanctuary of Grace Episcopal Church in East Grand Rapids, Michigan after the funeral Jan. 3. REUTERS

Immigrant entrepreneurs shine in US tech startups

By Rachel Konrad

SAN FRANCISCO—FOREIGN-born entrepreneurs were behind one in four technology startups in the United States over the past decade, according to a study to be published Thursday.

A team of researchers at Duke University estimated 25.3 percent of technology and engineering companies started between 1995 and 2005 had founders, chief executives, presidents or chief technology officers who were born outside the United States. That is striking, given that just 11.7 percent of the US population is foreign-born, according to US Census data.

Immigrant entrepreneurs' companies employed 450,000 workers and generated $52 billion in sales in 2005, according to the survey.

Their contributions to corporate coffers, employment and US competitiveness in the global technology sector offers a counterpoint to the recent political debate over immigration and the economy, which largely centers on unskilled, illegal workers in low-wage jobs.

"It's one thing if your gardener gets deported," said the project's lead researcher, Vivek Wadhwa. "But if these entrepreneurs leave, we're really denting our intellectual property creation."

Immigrants were most likely to start companies in the semiconductor, communications and software niches. They were least likely to enter the defense sector.

One of the study's biggest surprises was the extent to which Indians led the entrepreneurial pack. Of an estimated 7,300 US tech startups founded by immigrants, 26 percent have Indian founders, CEOs, presidents or head researchers, the study found. *AP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Reyes begins Derby Classic title defense /A22

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Valero tells Pacman: Fight me, cab driver

VALERO: Waiting

IT TOOK JUST 72 SECONDS for knockout artist Edwin Valero to prove just how brutal he can be with his fists.

In less time than that, he showed he could be brutal with his words too.

Valero dared Filipino ring sensation Manny Pacquiao to face him in the ring, saying he would be more than willing to line the year's top fighter up among the supposed "tricycle drivers" list of opponents the Venezuelan has floored.

An irked Valero issued the dare on the heels of reports that Pacquiao had described as "tricycle drivers" the fighters the unbeaten South American had clobbered on the way to a spotless 21-0 record.

"I want Manny (Pacquiao) next, [and I] hope [Bob] Arum is listening," the reigning WBA super featherweight titleholder was quoted as saying by boxingconfidential.com. "I don't want to hear from Manny a lot of excuses to fight me this time. If our fight will happen, he will realize that he, too, is a cab driver."

Valero is hoping that in a fight against Pacquiao, he can prove that the Filipino, too, can be lined up among the list of so-called "patsies" he has faced.

The latest Valero victim was Mexican challenger Michael Lozada, whom the Venezuelan destroyed in just 72 seconds in Tokyo, Japan, Wednesday night, bringing to 19 the number of opponents he has stopped in the first round.

Actually, Valero, who calls Japan his home, won his first 18 bouts via first-round stoppages. Only two opponents managed to last more round—Genaro Trazancos lasted two rounds, while ex-WBA champ Vicente Mosquera was stopped in the 10th round of their world title duel.

But not everybody in Team Valero agrees the hard-puncher is ready to face an equally powerful southpaw like Pacquiao, who also has tremendous hand speed to complement his punching prowess.

Valero's Japanese promoter Akihiko Honda, in an interview with Japanese media, stressed earlier that Valero is not yet ready for Pacquiao in 2007, but will be available next year.

Pacquiao is currently weighing his option as to his next opponent on April 28 in Macau, China, and Valero is one of the names being submitted to him as a possible opponent.

"I can fight already but the earliest would be April," Pacquiao, voted as Ring Magazine's 2006 Fighter of the Year, said Wednesday. Pacquiao is currently in a crossfire between Bob Arum's Top Rank and Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions. *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

MANNY Pacquiao in no hurry to take on the relatively unknown Valero.

MVP-Jinggoy agreement sparks optimism at POC

By June Navarro

PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE PRESIdent Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday expressed optimism that the agreement forged by the country's basketball leaders will push through.

Telecommunications magnate Manny V. Pangilinan and BAP head Sen. Jinggoy Estrada had struck a deal during the holidays in an effort to end the power struggle between the BAP and Pilipinas Basketball and pave the way for the lifting of the Fiba (international basketball federation) suspension on the country.

"With the turn of events, the Basketball Association of the Philippines has no choice but to concur," said Cojuangco.

"If they block it, that act will only add up to the pieces of evidence that we could present to the court of arbitration and the Fiba."

Under the agreement, Estrada will sit as chair and Pangilinan as president of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas.

MVP-JINGGOY/ A22

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PUREFOODS and Roger Yap got the better of Sta. Lucia and Alex Cabagnot during Wednesday's playoff for an outright quarterfinal slot.
ERIK ARAZAS

Realtors tackle Express; Aces take on Tigers

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Alaska vs Coca-Cola
7:20 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Air21

PUREFOODS COACH RYAN Gregorio sounded like he knew perfectly well what he was talking about—even though he was talking of another squad.

"They will pick up the pieces, they have the tools to do so," Gregorio said Wednesday night, referring to Sta. Lucia, the team his Chunkee Giants beat to make the quarterfinals of the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup.

From so high up in the standings and now down to the trenches, the Realtors start picking up the pieces tonight when they clash with the Air21 Express to open the wild-card phase at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

This is a round no one thought the Realtors would be in, especially after they set the pace for long stretches in the elimination round.

But Sta. Lucia lost most of the games it needed to win late in the round, including a 78-92 decision to the defending champion Purefoods in their KO game for the last outright quarterfinal seat.

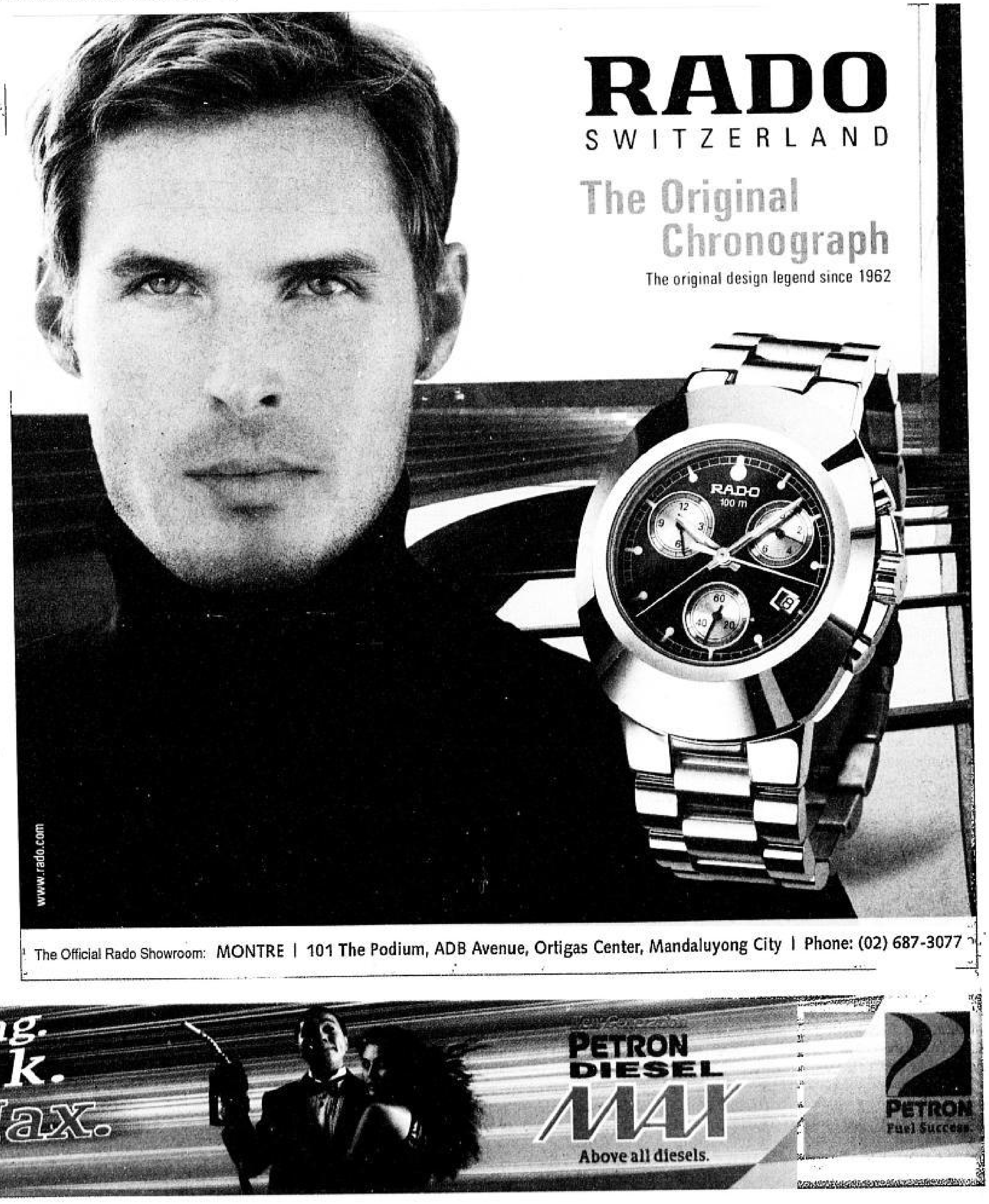
The Realtors will open wildcard action still on top of the four-team field with a 10-8 record carried over from the eliminations, three games ahead of the Express when they clash at 7:20 p.m.

Alaska, in second place with an 8-10 slate, and the 5-13 Coca-Cola Tigers collide in the first game at 4:35 p.m.

Tournament format calls for any team to earn a playoff with the natural round topnotcher if it sweeps the wild-card phase. This is the only option available, it seems, to the Aces, Express and the Tigers, with Sta. Lucia enjoying a commanding lead.

Since the phase will just be a single round, the Realtors could wind up with the top ranking, and a quarterfinals berth, even if they win just one of three games.

Kelly Williams has slowly taken over the Realtors, but the super rookie has not gotten much help from the old reliables like Dennis Espino, Marlou Aquino and Paolo Mendoza. *Musong R. Castillo*



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Go goes as Cojuangco's special assistant

GO: Enough of the quarrels.

FOR GO TENG KOK, IT'S TIME TO GO.

The controversial president of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association officially severed his ties with Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco on Wednesday when he tendered his resignation as Special Assistant to the POC head.

"It is with deep regret that I irrevocably resign my position as Special Assistant to the POC president effective immediately," GTK wrote in a letter to Cojuangco Jan. 3.

"Recent developments that have affected my working relationship with some members of the POC Executive Committee have made my situation untenable," he added.

In a meeting last Dec. 20, Go got involved in a near-fight with fellow POC executive committee members Rep. Monico Puentevella and Buddy Andrada after a heated argument over Go's alleged involvement in a move to oust Table Tennis Association of the Philippines head Victor Valbuena.

"It is my sincere hope that I did not violate your trust and confidence during my stint," Go added. "I assure you that I will continue to support your administration.

Go ended his letter by thanking Cojuangco "for the opportunity which further enriched my appreciation of the Olympic movement."

POC spokesman Joey Romasanta said Cojuangco received Go's letter Wednesday night, but declined to comment pending a meeting with Go next week.

Go was perceived to be instrumental in Cojuangco's ascension to the POC hierarchy in 2005 after a falling out with then POC president Cito Dayrit. However, Go's relationship with Cojuangco started to turn cold when Go allegedly tried to help the expelled Basketball Association of the Philippines get back into the fold of the Olympic body.

The last straw turned out to be Go's alleged machinations to ease out Valbuena. As a result, some POC executive committee members reportedly asked Go to resign from the committee. But Go, the report added, wanted Cojuangco to fire him instead.

Cojuangco refused to make any action against Go, but the athletics head apparently felt he was no longer needed.

He had to let go. *Roy Luarca*

Reyes begins Derby Classic title defense

EFREN "BATA" REYES AIMS TO EXTEND his dominance in the Derby City Classic when the star-studded tournament begins today at the Executive West Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky.

The 55-year-old Filipino billiards Hall of Famer has ruled the annual competition since 2004 and is again the top favorite to pocket the $11,000 champion's purse.

Reyes, the 1999 Cardiff World Pool champ from Puyat Sports stable, left on New Year's Eve for Los Angeles, California.

Another Filipino ace, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, and his manager Rolly Vicente left the country on Jan. 2 and later joined Reyes in Kentucky.

Also seeing in action in the Derby City Classic are rising stars Dennis Orcollo and Gandy Valle, both playing under Bugsy's Promotion. The duo left on Jan. 3.

In last year's Derby City Classic, Reyes won at the expense of American Jason Miller with Filipino-Canadian and 2004 World Pool champion Alex Pagulayan finishing third.

Reyes also competed in last year's Derby City Master of the Table where he finished second and won $3,000, Derby City 9-ball met where he settled for third place worth $4,300, and Derby City Bank tournament where he wound up in 48th place.

Jose "Amang" Parica, who led the invasion of Filipino cue artists in the United States in the mid-1980s, won the 2003 Derby City Classic before Reyes took over.

According to www.AZbilliards.com, Reyes topped the 2006 money list with total earnings of $644,960, including a record $500,000 after winning the 2006 World IPT 8-ball in Reno, Nevada, last September.

Only a fraction of the World IPT purse has been paid, however, after organizers encountered financial difficulties.

Philippine billiards patron Aristeo "Putch" Puyat said that Reyes' impressive performance last year was largely due to the laser surgery on his eye in 2005 to enhance his vision. Marlon Bernardino, contributor

REYES: Derby champ since 2004

PDI PHOTO

MVP-Jinggoy . . .

From page A21

The SBP was formed after representatives from the BAP and PB agreed to unite based on a joint communique forged with the Fiba in Tokyo some months back.

Several BAP officials, however, protested Estrada's move and insisted that the new basketball group should be named BAP.

"If they (BAP officials) don't get what they want, they will turn down the agreement," said Cojuangco of the BAP "rebels." "But we in the POC know what to do whatever happens."

The POC chief hinted that another basketball stalemate would force them to seek redress from the court of arbitration and the Fiba.

"How can the Fiba deny the position of the SBP when everything that was agreed upon in Japan has been carried out?" said Cojuangco.

Volleyball to launch nationwide talent search

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HEIGHT AND AGE WILL BE THE KEY REquirements in the nationwide search for talents by the Philippine Volleyball Federation for the men's and women's national teams that will be fielded in the Thailand Southeast Asian Games late this year.

"Our objective is excellence in Southeast Asia," said newly elected PVF president Pete Mendoza yesterday. "We need to identify young talents and put them in training as soon as possible."

Mendoza said at least four training centers all over the country will be set up to facilitate the search for fresh talents from the countryside.

The height requirement for prospects is at least 6 feet for men and at least 5-foot-9½ for women. Aspirants must be 19 years old and younger.

The PVF has set up training centers in Bacolod City for the Visayas, Davao for Mindanao and Baguio City for Luzon. The Metro Manila training center will be at the University of Santo Tomas.

"We are looking for a mixture of homegrown and Fil-American talents," said Mendoza, adding that he has overseas contacts who will handle the recruitment of United States-based Filipinos.

The association hopes to pick up from the success of the Fil-Am beach volleyball tandem of Heidi Ilustre and Diane Pascua in the 2005 Philippine SEA Games.

The intensive recruitment program of the association will start this month, according to Mendoza, with training to begin in February.

The Philippine women's team used to dominate the SEA Games, winning the gold medal for the last time in 1993. The men's team has yet to win a gold in the SEAG.

Bacolod may host Asian Youth volley

BACOLOD CITY—AFTER SUCCESSFULLY STAGING a major football tournament last year, the city may again host another big sports undertaking—the Asian Youth Boys' Volleyball Championship in May.

"Bacolod may be given the task of hosting the Asian tournament because it would be too expensive to stage it in Manila," said Roger Banzuela, a former president of the Philippine Volleyball Federation, yesterday.

Banzuela, who now serves as the chair of the PVF Coaching Commission, said other possible sites have been discussed by PVF officials during a recent workshop in Manila in case Bacolod will not be available.

The PVF will withdraw the hosting task if a marketing group meant to raise funds for the event is not formed at least a month before the event, he added.

Banzuela said that the Asian tournament will be used by the PVF as a fund-raising activity to pay its $100,000 debt to the international volleyball federation. *Christian Irl Tan, Inquirer Visayas*

Dableo gunning for GM title in Viet Zonals

DABLEO

RONALD DABLEO BECAME AN OUTRIGHT International Master in Vietnam nearly four years ago. Now, he is returning in search of his grandmaster title.

The 27-year-old Dableo is among a crack group of Filipinos competing in the Asian Zonals 3.3 Chess Championship slated Jan. 10-19 in Phu Quoc, Kien Giang province.

Dableo rose to prominence when, as an untitled player, he won the 2003 3.2a Asian Zonal in Ho Chi Minh City. That feat earned him an outright IM title, a GM result and a stint in the 2004 Fide World Championship in Tripoli, Libya.

Later in December 2003, Dableo helped the Philippine rapid chess team to the gold medal in the Southeast Asian Games held in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh.

"Vietnam seems to be a lucky place for me," Dableo said in Filipino. "My life as a player changed when I won the Zonals in 2003."

"I'm hoping that my luck will continue in Vietnam this year," added Dableo, who obtained his second GM result in the 2006 PGMA International Open held in Manila in November.

Other Filipinos seeing action in the Zonals, which offers two slots for the World Championships, are GMs Mark Paragua, Rogelio Antonio Jr. and Eugene Torre, IMs Wesley So, Oliver Dimakiling, Darwin Laylo and Mark Paragua. Entered in the distaff side are Christy Bernales, WIM Beverly Mendoza and WNM Kimberly Jane Cunanan.

Grandmaster-candidate Jayson Gonzales remains undecided whether to play in the nine-round Swiss system event.

Dableo, Laylo and Gonzales only need one GM result to complete their GM status.

National Chess Federation of the Philippines president and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay Jr. aims to produce "at least" four Filipino GMs under his term. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Candidates, F. Eastern booters clash for 2nd

GAMES TOMORROW
(Marikina Sports Complex)
10 a.m.—Candidates vs. FEU
1 p.m.—Sphere vs. San Beda
3 p.m.—Santo Tomas vs. Nomads

CANDIDATES AND Far Eastern University dispute solo second place as the second round of the Ang Liga Pilipina football tournament starts tomorrow at the Marikina Sports Complex.

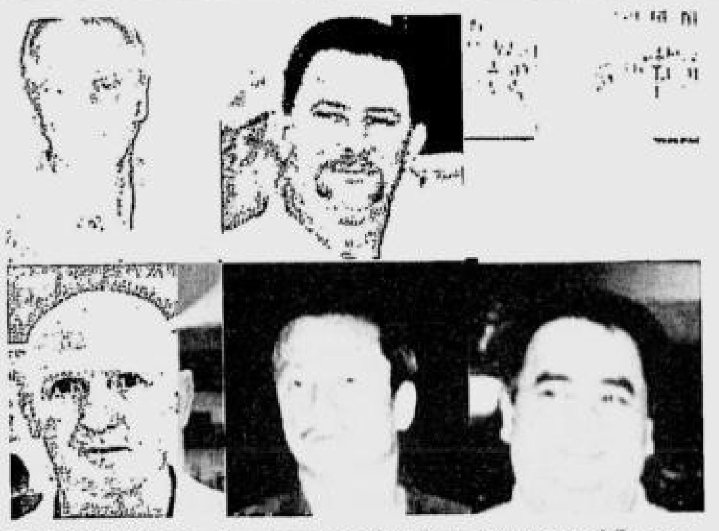
Both sporting 5-1 win-loss marks, Candidates and FEU tangle in the 10 a.m. opening game of a triple bill.

Sphere (3-3) and San Beda (1-6) take to the pitch at 1 p.m. before frontrunning Santo Tomas (5-0) battles Nomads (3-3) at 3 p.m. in the tournament organized by Philippine National Women's Football Association, sponsored by Mizuno and backed by the Marikina City government of Mayor Marides Fernando.

"Now that the teams have more or less settled down, we can look forward to closer matches and keener competition," said tournament director Cathy Rivilla.

Composed mostly of national pool members, the Candidates are slight favorites over the FEU booters who they beat, 1-0, in the first round last Oct. 15.

FEU has been on roll after that, however, and are expected to be tougher to beat this time.



EARLY BIRDS: Top American breeders (from left, top row) Roger Roberts, Joe Stanfield, Richard Lainier and Johnny Philips (bottom left) are among the expected early arrivals for the World Slasher Cup slated Jan. 16, 18 and 20 at the Araneta Coliseum. The derby masters want their gamefowls acclimatized to local conditions early, according to organizers. The Filipino defending champions are Dicky Lim, Joel Fernando, Nene Abello and Philip Chiongbian.

Doubleheader opens UAAP s'ball tomorrow

DIAMOND ACTION IN THE UNIVERSITY ATHletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) starts this weekend with UP and Ateneo clashing in the softball opener tomorrow and University of the East taking on Santo Tomas in the second game.

Defending women's softball champion Adamson and baseball titlist University of the Philippines drew opening-day byes.

The UP-Ateneo softball clash starts at 10 a.m. at the University of Santo Tomas field in Sampaloc right after brief opening ceremonies.

The Lady Falcons, the perennial UAAP champions, see action on Wednesday against the Lady Eagles. Wednesday's other match, also at the UST field pits, University of the Philippines against Santo Tomas.

Baseball at the Rizal Memorial ball park on Sunday will pit UST against Adamson at 9 a.m. after the 8 a.m. opening ceremonies. Ateneo and National U tangle in the second game.

UP, which won its seventh crown in the UAAP last year at UST's expense, swings into action Thursday against Adamson. UST and NU clash in the other Thursday game.

Meanwhile, Far Eastern is on track to retain the men's crown while UST shows the way in the women's division of volleyball.

SPORTSWATCH

'iPBA (Ang Bagong Laro)' starts Sunday

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF PRO BASKETBALL GETS A REFRESHING LOOK AS the Philippine Basketball Association launches the new, 30-minute magazine show "iPBA (Ang Bagong Laro)" beginning this Sunday. To be hosted by magazine columnist and movie actress Asia Agcaoili, the weekly show marks the first venture of PBA Entertainment into TV production. "I hope PBA fans will support this new undertaking the way they have been patronizing the league in the past 32 years," said commissioner Noli Eala. The TV show offers inside stories, scoops and behind-the-scene features. The league's latest program is part of the mission vision of Eala and the PBA Board at the start of the 2006-07 season and aimed at cashing in on the gains made by the league last year, when it enjoyed considerable increase in both its gross and net incomes.

Pasay Cockers derby today Jan. 5

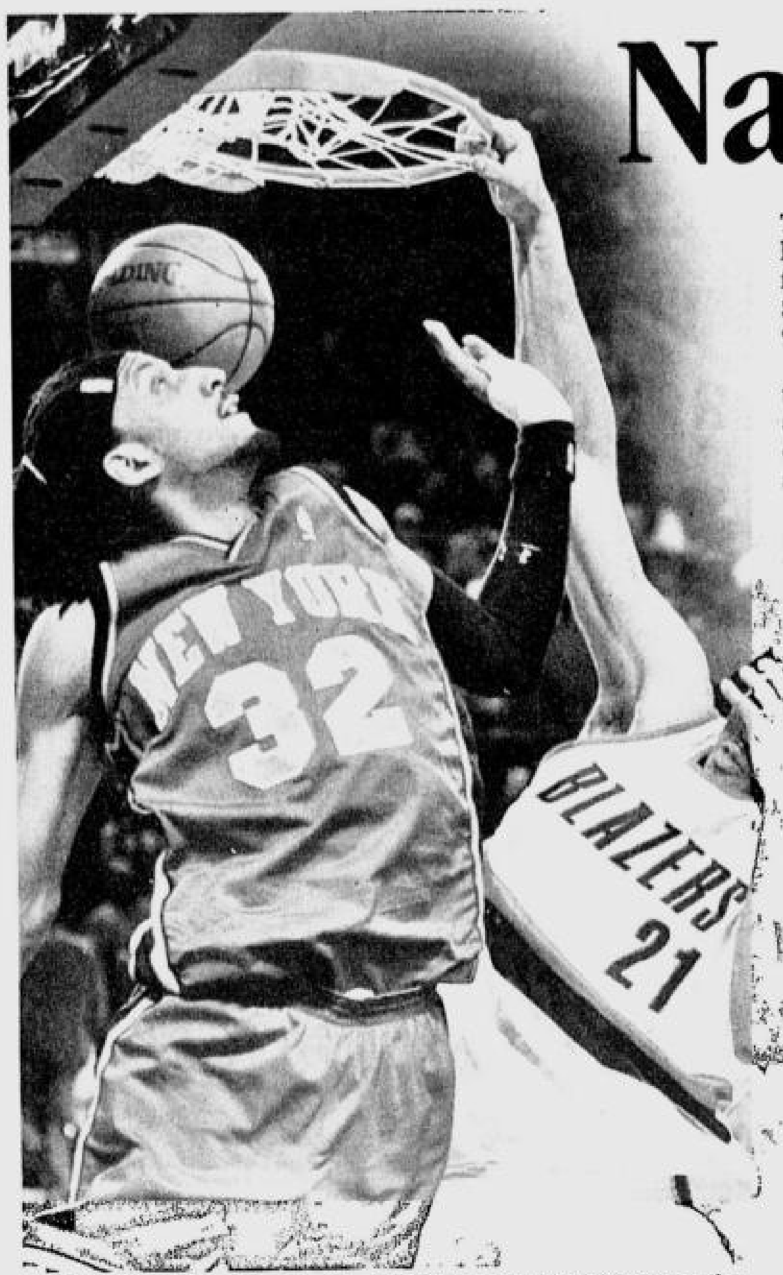
NINETY FIGHTS ARE ON TAP AT THE START TODAY OF THE 2007 PASAY Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) 5-cock derby series at the Pasay City Cockpit. The derby, sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, starts at 4 p.m. Pit manager Eric dela Rosa said the participant with the highest points earned after the seven-derby series will win the PCCA Cocker of the Year honors. Computerized matching will be adopted to make the cockfest more exciting and unpredictable, said Dela Rosa. Another big event sizzles at the same venue on Jan. 9, 11 and 13 via the 2007 NCA World Championship 8-Cock Derby. Boxing hero Manny Pacquiao (Super Pacman) and Rep. Gerry "Boy" Espina (Mt. Panamao Red Creek), champion and runner-up respectively in the 2006 NCA World Championship, lead the tough list of local participants.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Gung Ho (3), Ocean Deep (1), Spanish Drums (5), Verdadera (6)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Arotic Desert (3), Kalmia (6), Alexis Magic (4), Hickam (5)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Detective daryll (9), Lovable Trisha (3), Morning Nell (5), Awesome Power (4), St. Emilion (7)
Race 4—(Trifecta)—Irene's Fantasy/Sweet Xarah (3), Mojito (1), Ziraz (5)
Race 5—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—War Bird (5), Jay Nicole (3), Hazit Coming (9), Real Tough (10), Modern Spirit/Elusive Quality (4), Quant Je Puis (8)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Manhattan (1), Cool Town (5), Man Power (3), Lucky Joe (6)
Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—Odyssey (6), Carbon Copy (2), Ingay Ingay (1), Lord Elgene
Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Fujioka/Misa Fantastic (6), Anahita (9), Golden Connection/Dalcross (2), Dark Desert (7), Snowdipped (1)
Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Strong Jays (11), Galaxy Wars (1), Hezabellagio (9), Revelation (12), Jawbreaker (7), Yoshiwara (6)

Nash, Arenas torch nets



JAMAAL Magloire of the Portland Trail Blazers covers his eyes as he dunks over Renaldo Balkman of the New York Knicks. AFP

TORONTO—STEVE NASH MADE SEVERAL key shots in the fourth quarter to lead all five starters in double figures as the Phoenix Suns posted their fourth straight win, a 100-98 triumph over the Toronto Raptors.

Canada's Nash scored 13 of his 15 points in the final period for the Suns, who improved to an impressive 13-1 against Eastern Conference opponents. He also handed out nine assists on Wednesday.

"(Nash) never fails," Suns guard Raja Bell said. "It's always timely and it's always exactly what we need, whether it be an assist or a big defensive play or big buckets like he did."

The fourth overall pick in 2003, Chris Bosh had missed the previous 12 games with a bruised left knee. He finished with 26 points, 14 rebounds and two blocks.

"I felt good," Bosh said. "There were times that I was huffing and puffing, but I've worked hard in the past."

Nash's 3-pointer from the right wing gave the Suns a 94-92 advantage with 1:19 left. However, Toronto responded with a three-point play on the next possession to regain a one-point edge.

"We did a great job to come back and were able to get up one point, but they did a great job, with Nash making some great plays," Raptors rookie Andrea Bargnani said. "We feel like we should have won because we played well."

In Washington, Gilbert Arenas continued his hot streak with a three-pointer at the buzzer to lead the Washington Wizards to a 108-105 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks.

With the score tied at 105-105, Arenas launched a 32-footer from beyond the top of the key and remained expressionless as it sailed through the net to cap a 32-point night.

"We knew it was going to be a close game but we just wanted to be the team to finish the game with a win," Arenas, who had 11 rebounds and eight assists, told reporters. "We pulled it out. We fought our butts off."

"We were not going to run a play at the end of the game," said Arenas. "The play was to get up the court and get a good shot."

Arenas, the Eastern Conference Player of the Month in December after averaging 34.1 points and 6.2 assists, calmly walked to the bench following the game winner as the crowd cheered; "M-V-P, M-V-P."

"He times it just right, he gets himself in position, and then it was just the flick of the wrist," Wizards coach Eddie Jordan said. "He is amazing."

Reuters, AFP

COMPLETE NBA RESULTS: Phoenix 100, Toronto 98; Washington 108, Milwaukee 105; Cleveland 107, Boston 104; LA Clippers 110, Miami 95; Memphis 144, Golden State 135; Minnesota 103, San Antonio 101, OT; Houston 103, Seattle 96; Utah 98, Philadelphia 87; New York 99, Portland 81

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No. 1 drops out of Aussie Open

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA—JUSTINE Henin-Hardenne has withdrawn from the Australian Open for undisclosed personal reasons.

Australian Open spokesman John Lindsay confirmed Thursday that Henin-Hardenne—the No. 1 women's player in the world—withdrew from the tournament that begins Jan. 15 in Melbourne. She was the runner-up last year.

Lindsay said Australian Open officials checked with the women's tennis tour after the Belgian player withdrew earlier Thursday from next week's Sydney International and were told Henin-Hardenne would not be playing in the first Grand Slam tournament of the year either.

No official reason was given, although Henin-Hardenne was expected to release a statement Friday.

Sydney International tournament director Craig Watson said senior officials from the WTA Tour informed them of Henin-Hardenne's decision on Thursday.

"I was told the withdrawal was for personal reasons," Watson said. "Obviously we are very disappointed; Justine is our defending champion.

"I believe she is quite upset and we certainly wish her the best and hope she is able to return to the courts very soon."

Amelie Mauresmo, who won the Australian Open and Wimbledon last year, will take over as the top seed for the Sydney tournament which begins Monday.

Henin-Hardenne, 24, won the French Open last season and reached the final at the three other majors before capping 2006 with a win in the season-ending WTA Tour Championship.

She had a 60-8 record in 2006. *AP*

No more second chances for Tyson—lawyer

TYSON: Drug charges

PHOENIX—FORMER heavyweight boxing champ Mike Tyson was charged Wednesday with drug possession and driving under the influence of drugs, and the top prosecutor of Arizona's most populous county wants to send him to prison.

"He has run out of second chances, at least in my book," Maricopa County Attorney Andrew Thomas said in a news conference.

Tyson, 40, was charged with two felonies for drug possession and two misdemeanor counts of driving under the influence of drugs. If convicted of all four charges, he could be sentenced to between 2 1/4 and 7 1/2 years.

The charges stem from his arrest Friday in Scottsdale, where Tyson was stopped in his car after leaving a nightclub. An officer found bags of cocaine in his back pocket and another in a package of cigarettes in his car, according to court records.

Tyson's criminal attorney, Thomas Marlow, didn't return phone calls Wednesday from The Associated Press.

Tyson's arrest was his latest legal entanglement, dating more than a decade.

In 1992, Tyson was convicted of rape in Indiana. Six years later, the former boxing champ pleaded no contest to misdemeanor assault charges in Maryland.

Thomas said Tyson's record makes him eligible for prison time instead of Arizona's drug treatment programs for nonviolent offenders.

"I don't take any pleasure out of doing this," Thomas said. "A week ago, my kids and I were watching Rocky Balboa in the movie theater, and we saw Mike Tyson make a cameo appearance in the movie, and now here we are and he's looking at going back to prison."

Tyson became the youngest heavyweight champion in history in 1986, when at 20 he knocked out Trevor Berbick. Four years later he was knocked out by James "Buster" Douglas. *AP*

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SPORTS

TONI Leviste clears an obstacle on board Globe Platinum Just Jewels at the recent 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar.

Leviste breaks old barrier in World Cup Arab League

TOP FILIPINO EQUESTRIENNE TONI LEVISTE has been invited to compete in the World Cup Arab Jumping League, the first non-Arab to be accorded the honor in the event slated Jan. 10 to March 25 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Sheikh Mohamad Al Thani of the royal Qatari family invited Leviste to the circuit that started in 2004 exclusive to Arab participants.

The Dubai inaugural will be followed by stops in Sharja, Abu Dhabi, Ajaman, all in the United Arab Emirates; then Manama, Bahrain; Doha, Qatar, and finally in Damascus, Syria.

Sports patron Jean Henri Lhuillier, who continues to support Leviste, expressed pride over the equestrienne's participation.

"It is our privilege to be part of a fellow Filipino's participation in this prestigious event," said Lhuillier. "Toni is making history by being the first non-Arab to be invited in this tournament."

Leviste won the World Cup Southeast Asian Jumping League in 1999 and 2005.

In her debut in the Arabian League, Leviste will be with her Doha Asian Games mount, the Swedish mare Globe Platinum Just Jewels.

Philippine equestrian manager Carissa Coscolluela will accompany Leviste.

Members of Checkmate teams known tomorrow

THE FINAL SELECTION TOURNAMENT for members of the United States- and Asia-bound Milo Checkmate team begins at 10 a.m. tomorrow at the lower 2F of St. Francis Square in Mandaluyong City. Eleven berths will be contested by the 17 semifinalists who advanced from the two elimination series that concluded Wednesday. The first slot in the 12-man Checkmate team has been reserved for 11-year-old Malcolm Kwok, of Jubilee Christian Academy, for his fine showing in the unrated section of the 2005 World Open. No Checkmate team was sent to the US last year. Divided into four sections—8-under, 10-under, 12-under, junior division—the selection tourney is organized each year by Metropolitan Chess Club.

TORIBIO CUP VOLLEY

SSC, Hope take it

SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE-MANILA TOOK the boys' crown and Hope Christian High School the girls' title in the recent sixth FC Toribio Volleyball Cup at the University of the East (UE) gym.

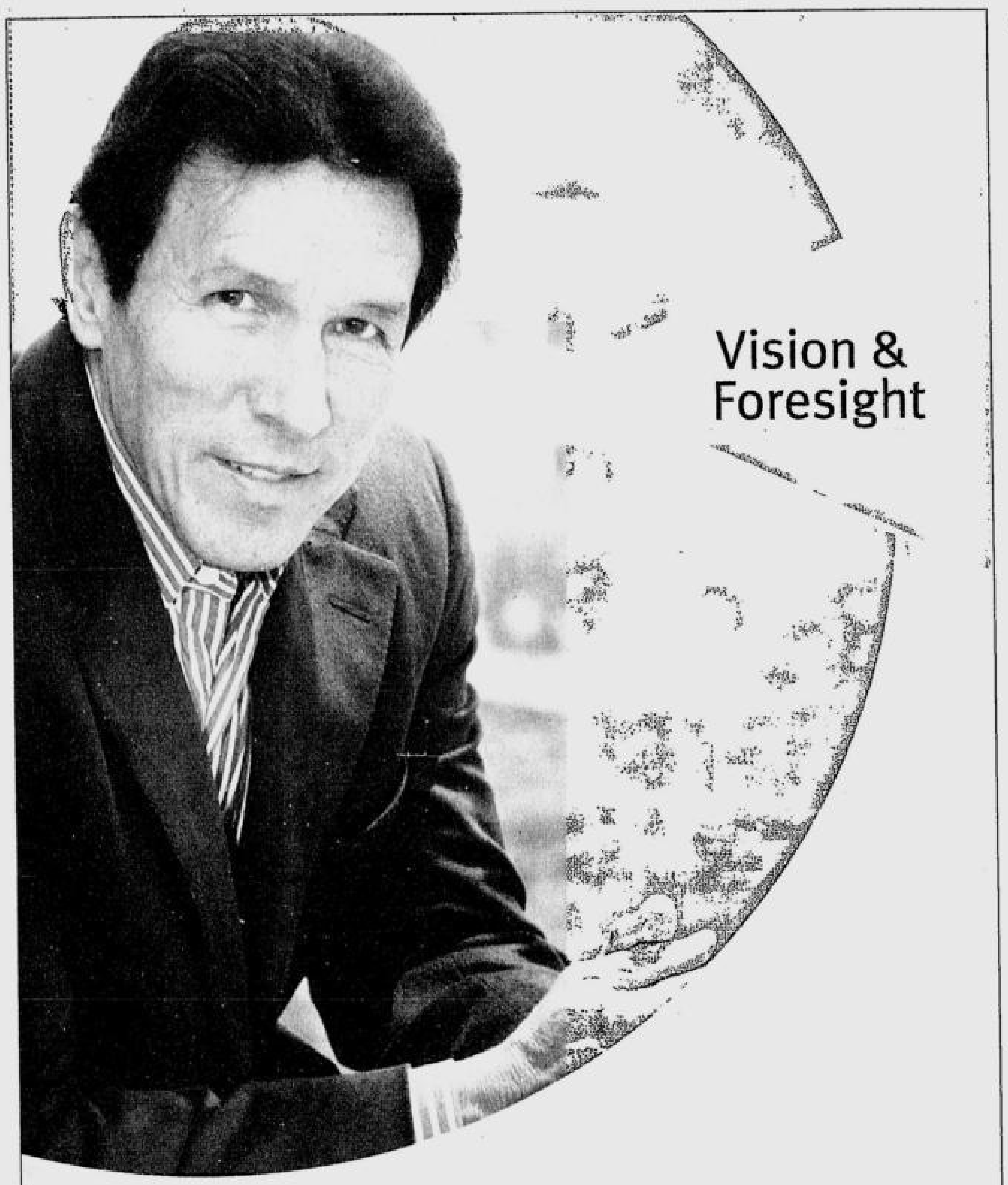
San Sebastian defeated De La Salle-Lipa, 20-25, 25-18, 25-18, 25-20, in the boys' final of the tournament held in honor of Francisco Toribio, the UAAP volleyball coach who steered UE to a string of title victories.

Canossa made Lipa City proud by taking third place at the expense of University of Santo Tomas, 20-25, 25-19, 25-19, in the annual event organized by UE sports director Brenn Perez.

Hope Christian, meanwhile, overpowered UST, 25-9, 25-20, 25-18, to dominate the girls' contest. Former champion UE was third after beating San Antonio de Padua College, also of Lipa City, 25-15, 23-25, 25-15.

Twelve teams took part in each of the boys' and girls' divisions of the tournament that was alternately played at the UE Gym 5 in Manila and in Caloocan.

The teams were from UE, UST, Lourdes School-Mandaluyong, Claret School, School of Saint Anthony-Lagro, Holy Trinity Academy, Imus Institute, De la Salle-Lipa, Hope Christian, San Sebastian, Letran, Diliman Preparatory School, UP Integrated School, San Antonio De Padua College, Philippine Institute of Quezon City, Holy Trinity, Valenzuela National High, San Beda College-Taytay and Batasan National High.



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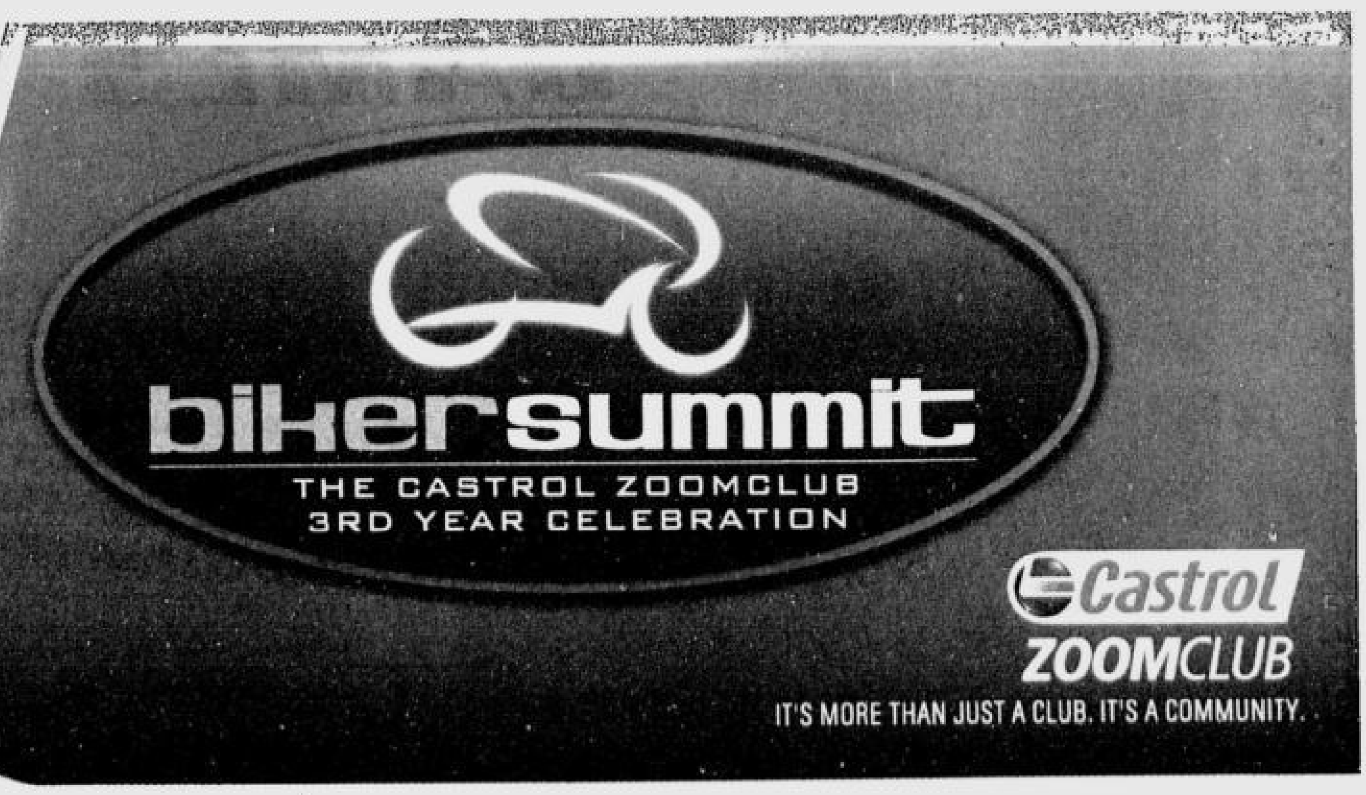

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Lenders back down from their demand to be paid first

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS and Sewerage System may now proceed with the transfer of its stake in Maynilad Water Services Inc. to the winning bidder of the utility after creditors of the former concessionaire yesterday gave their consent to the re-privatization deal.

Minority shareholder Suez Environment (formerly Ondeo Services), and Maynilad lender Deutsche Bank AG, have submitted to the rehabilitation court their consent to the transaction between the regulator MWSS and the group that would acquire the west zone concession, DMCI Holdings and Metro Pacific Corp.

A third creditor, Avenue Asia Special Situation Fund, yesterday failed to submit its consent along with the others. But according to a lawyer, the matter is now for the rehabilitation court to decide.

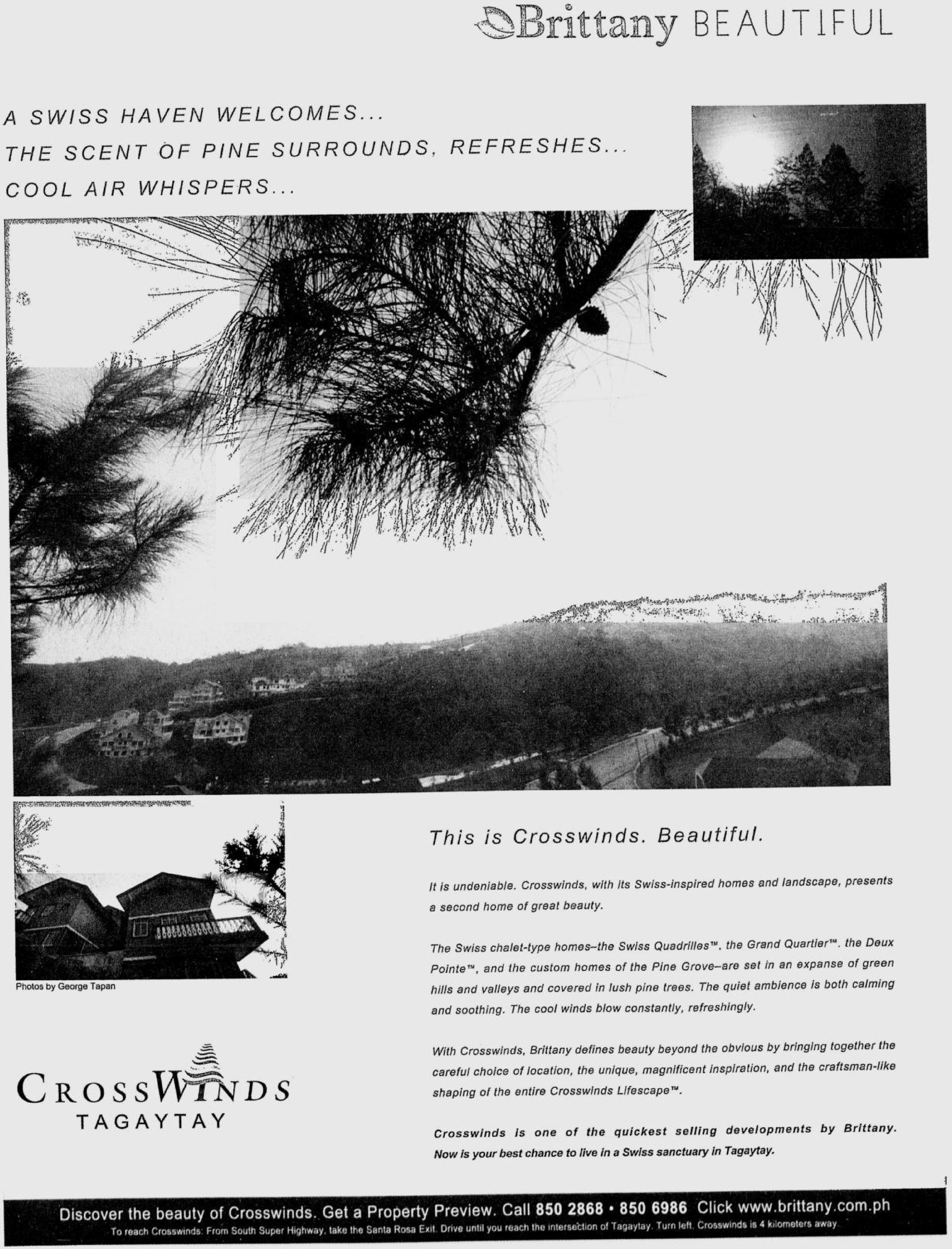
Judge Reynaldo B. Daway of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 90 yesterday said that, since there appeared to be no opposition from among the parties concerned, the court in effect would allow the MWSS to close the deal with the new private operator of the water concession.

Maynilad's creditors last week demanded partial payment of what the former concessionaire owed them, before they could give their consent to the deal. Government lawyers, led by Agnes Devanadera of the OGCC, opposed the move, saying that the government would need to close the deal first with the winning bidders before the DMCI-MPIC consortium could put up the money to partially pay the creditors.

The OGCC lawyers last week feared that the government, through the MWSS, would be saddled with Maynilad's debts, after the lenders announced their intention to withhold their consent.

The DMCI-MPIC consortium won the

WAY/B2



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Photos by George Tapan

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Realty firms in P10-B deal

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY FIRMS SUCAT LAND CORP. (SLC) and Landco Pacific Corp. have teamed up to develop a P10-billion residential project on SLC's 9.7 hectare property in Muntinlupa City.

SLC president Renato Leveriza Jr. said the project would take about 7-10 years to develop and would consist of 4,500 units.

Under the terms of the joint venture agreement, SLC will contribute its property at kilometer 21 East Service Road of the Manila South Expressway, while Landco will contribute funds and expertise to the development.

Landco, a unit of Metro Pacific Investment Corp., is a major real-estate development firm engaged in high-end residential resorts and leisure farms.

BPI sells Far East unit to Tiu group

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS HAS sold its stake in Far East Savings Bank to the Tiu group that develops and operates serviced apartments, such as the Discovery Suites.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, BPI vice president Gertie Sinio said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had approved the sale of BPI's 100-percent stake in Far East Savings Bank to JTKC Equities Inc., Surewell Equities Inc. and Star Equities Inc.

BPI did not say, however, for how much it sold its stake to the JTKC group.

The new owners plan to improve the thrift bank's operations, add more branches and rename it Sterling Bank of Asia Inc.

The purchase marks the return of the Filipino-Chinese group to the banking sector after it sold its 24.58-percent stake in International Exchange Bank last year to Union Bank of the Philippines for about P3 billion.

Aside from real estate, the Tiu group has interests in finance and manufacturing of construction materials and industrial chemicals.

Far East Savings Bank was one of the subsidiaries that BPI acquired as part of the assets of Far East Bank and Trust Co. which it acquired in 2000.

BPI, the country's third largest banking group, sold the idle unit as it already has subsidiaries involved in similar businesses.

Its operating subsidiaries include BPI Family Savings Bank, BPI Direct Savings Bank (for overseas Filipino workers), BPI Leasing Corp. and BPI International Finance Ltd. Hong Kong.

St. Peter Life Plan Certificate as Dealer of Pre-Need Life Plans renewed for 2007

The Securities and Exchange Commission, after considering the completion of all prescribed requirements, has renewed on December 8, 2006, the registration of ST. PETER LIFE PLAN, INC. as a Dealer of Pre-Need Life Plans in the Philippines valid from January 1, 2007 until December 31, 2007 per SEC Pre-Need Order No. 372 Series of 2006.

ST. PETER LIFE PLAN, INC. constantly aspires to be the choice of every Filipino in the delivery of world class DeathCare services and is an active and progressive partner in nation building.

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ADVERTORIAL

CURRENCIES

January 4, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.759648	1.000000	48.8670
Japan	Yen	0.006365	0.008379	0.4095
United Kingdom	Pound	1.481996	1.950900	95.3346
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097559	0.128427	6.2758
Switzerland	Franc	0.619463	0.815461	39.8491
Canada	Dollar	0.647942	0.852951	41.6812
Singapore	Dollar	0.495014	0.651636	31.8435
Australia	Dollar	0.601939	0.792393	38.7219
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.014980	2.652520	129.6207
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.202546	0.266631	13.0295
Brunei	Dollar	0.493405	0.649519	31.7400
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000112	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.021459	0.028249	1.3804
UAE	Dirham	0.206836	0.272279	13.3055
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.316400	64.3285
Korea	Won	0.000820	0.001080	0.0528
China	Yuan**	0.097327	0.128121	6.2609
Argentina	Peso	0.248657	0.327332	15.9957
Brazil	Real	0.355474	0.467946	22.8671
Denmark	Kroner	0.134157	0.176604	8.6301
India	Rupee	0.017171	0.022604	1.1046
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216424	0.284900	13.9222
Mexico	New Peso	0.070166	0.092366	4.5136
New Zealand	Dollar	0.535642	0.705119	34.4571
South Africa	Rand	0.109955	0.144745	7.0733
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023446	0.030864	1.5082

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time- Jan. 3, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian Time Closing Rate as of Dec. 29, 2006 (Bloomberg)

INSULAR LIFE

Wealth Builder and Wealth SECURE

Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure

UNIT PRICES (In Php)	Dec. 29,2006	Dec. 25,2006
Fixed Income Fund	1.262129	1.257499
Balanced Fund	1.343302	1.325641
Equity Fund	1.496867	1.458216

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

Shares down

SHARE PRICES closed 0.26 percent yesterday as profit-taking set in after the market hit fresh 10-year-highs, dealers said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 7.96 points to 3,012.74 after trading between 3,020.70 and 2,977.97.

The broader all-share index slipped 5.26 points to 1,872.24.

Losers outnumbered gainers 59 to 38, while 62 stocks ended unchanged. Volume turnover was 2.9 billion shares worth P4.8 billion.

"The market is taking a breather after the recent rally," said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings Inc. "A healthy pullback can be expected as the market again starts consolidating." *AFP*

Way . . .

From page B1

bid when they offered $504 million to acquire the water utility servicing Metro Manila's west zone and continue operations for the remaining years of the 25-year concession.

The winning bidder will also have to assume Maynilad's obligations under a debt and capital restructuring agreement with the MWSS.

"The final award to the winning bidder will guarantee the survival of the west concession that provides water to more than half of Metro Manila," Devanadera said.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CIRCULAR No. 554

Series of 2006

Subject: **Submission of Annual Audit Report (AAR)**

Pursuant to Monetary Board Resolution No. 1470 dated 30 November 2006, the Manual of Regulations for Banks (MORB) is hereby amended, as follows:

Section 1. The following provisions of Subsection X166.1 on Financial Audit is hereby amended to read, as follows:

"**Sec. X166.1 Financial Audit.** Banks shall cause an annual financial audit by an external auditor acceptable to the BSP not later than thirty (30) calendar days after the close of the calendar year or the fiscal year adopted by the bank. Report of such audit shall be submitted to the board of directors or country head, in the case of foreign bank branches, and the appropriate supervising and examining department of the BSP not later than one hundred twenty (120) calendar days after the close of the calendar year or the fiscal year adopted by the bank. The report to the BSP shall be accompanied by the: (1) Certification by the external auditor on the: (a) dates of start and termination of audit; (b) date of submission of the financial audit report and certification under oath stating that no material weakness or breach in the internal control and risk management systems was noted in the course of the audit of the bank to the board of directors or country head; and (c) the absence of any direct or indirect financial interest and other circumstances that may impair the independence of the external auditor; (2) Reconciliation Statement between the AFS and the balance sheet and income statement for bank proper (regular and FCDU) and trust department submitted to the BSP, including copies of adjusting entries ON THE RECONCILING ITEMS; and (3) other information that may be required by the BSP."

xxx

"Government-owned or controlled banks, including their subsidiaries and affiliates, as well as other financial institutions under BSP supervision which are under the concurrent jurisdiction of the Commission on Audit (COA) shall be exempt from the aforementioned annual financial audit by an acceptable external auditor: *Provided*, That when warranted by supervisory concern such as material weakness/breach in internal control and/or risk management systems, the Monetary Board may, upon recommendation of the appropriate supervising and examining department of the BSP, require the financial audit to be conducted by an external auditor acceptable to the BSP, at the expense of the institution concerned: Provided further, That when circumstances such as, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, loans from multilateral financial institutions, privatization, or public listing warrant, the financial audit of the institution concerned by an acceptable external auditor may also be allowed.

BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS UNDER THE CONCURRENT JURISDICTION OF THE BSP AND COA SHALL, HOWEVER, SUBMIT A COPY OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT (AAR) OF THE COA TO THE APPROPRIATE SUPERVISING AND EXAMINING DEPARTMENT OF THE BSP WITHIN THIRTY (30) BANKING DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE REPORT BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. THE AAR SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE: (1) CERTIFICATION BY THE INSTITUTION CONCERNED ON THE DATE OF RECEIPT OF THE AAR BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS; (2) RECONCILIATION STATEMENT BETWEEN THE AFS IN THE AAR AND THE BALANCE SHEET AND INCOME STATEMENT OF BANK PROPER (REGULAR AND FCDU) AND TRUST DEPARTMENT SUBMITTED TO THE BSP, INCLUDING COPIES OF ADJUSTING ENTRIES ON THE RECONCILING ITEMS; AND (3) OTHER INFORMATION THAT MAY BE REQUIRED BY THE BSP.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SAID INSTITUTIONS, IN A REGULAR OR SPECIAL MEETING, SHALL CONSIDER AND ACT ON THE AAR, AS WELL AS ON THE COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS AND SHALL SUBMIT, WITHIN THIRTY (30) BANKING DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE REPORT, A COPY OF ITS RESOLUTION TO THE APPROPRIATE SUPERVISING AND EXAMINING DEPARTMENT OF THE BSP. THE RESOLUTION SHALL SHOW THE ACTION(S) TAKEN ON THE REPORT, INCLUDING ON THE COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS AND THE NAMES OF THE DIRECTORS PRESENT AND ABSENT, AMONG OTHER THINGS."

XXX

Section 2. The **"Checklist of BSP Requirements in the Submission of Financial Audit Report and Reports Required Under Section 7 of Circular No. 410"** is hereby renamed **"Checklist of BSP Requirements in the Submission of Financial Audit Report (FAR), Annual Audit Report (AAR) and Reports Required Under Section 7 of Circular No. 410"** (Appendix to Subsec. X166.1) and amended as attached.

Section 3. The foregoing amendments are hereby adopted as amendments to the Q-Regulations, N-Regulations and S-Regulations of the Manual of Regulations for Non-Bank Financial Institutions (MORNBFI).

This Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication either in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

For the Monetary Board:

(*Sgd.*) **AMANDO M. TETANGCO, JR.**
Governor

22 December 2006

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Jan. 4, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.3	14,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	45	45	44.5	45	514,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	65.5	65.5	64.5	65	1,970,400
China Banking Corp.	700	700	700	700	4,030
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.46	3,130,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	51	51	49	50	2,452,200
Philippine National Bank	45	45.5	45	45	69,500
Phil. Savings Bank	48	48	48	48	14,900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	24.5	24.5	24	24	74,100
Security Bank Corp.	66	66.5	66	66.5	239,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	49	49	48.5	49	313,700
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Atr Kimeng Fin. Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	50,000
Bankard Inc.	0.78	0.81	0.78	0.81	110,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	173,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1625	1625	1625	1625	370
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.36	1.38	460,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	287.5	287.5	287.5	287.5	511,130
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2010	2020	2010	2020	100
Ivantage Corp.	1.62	1.64	1.62	1.64	2,147,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
Pnoc Energy Dev. Corp.	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.6	106,373,000
First Gen Corp.	56	56	55.5	55.5	499,900
First Phil Hldgs Corp	66.5	67.5	66	67.5	1,298,700
Manila Electric Co. A	57.5	59	55.5	59	542,700
Manila Electric Co. B	57	59.5	56	59.5	1,198,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.4	9.4	9.1	9.2	7,500,000
Petron Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.05	4.1	6,476,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	110,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	85,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.18	1.18	1.16	1.18	1,134,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.75	3.8	650,000
Cadp Group Corp.	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	3,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.75	20.75	20.5	20.5	20,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	43.5	44	43.5	44	724,100
Pancake House Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	37,000
Rfm Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	60,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.75	2.65	2.75	341,000
San Miguel Corp. A	66	66	65	65	93,100
San Miguel Corp. B	77	77	76	76	145,000
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.16	2.2	2.14	2.18	1,290,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19.25	19.25	18.75	19	399,900
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.2	1.22	1.14	1.2	29,953,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3.2	3.25	3.15	3.25	286,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.6	7.8	905,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	1,000
Republic Cement Corp.	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	282,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc	5.7	5.8	5.5	5.6	3,623,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.67	0.69	22,140,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.21	5,200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	5,000,000
Ayala Corp.	585	585	555	565	265,050
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.64	0.65	0.64	0.64	630,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	7.4	7.4	7.1	7.4	884,000
Alliance Global Group Inc	8.5	8.7	7.7	8	195,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.06	6,300,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.05	3.05	3	3	1,924,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	5,660,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	9,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.12	1,164,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.7	1.52	1.54	271,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.1	99,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10.25	9.8	9.8	60,300
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.34	2.65	2.28	2.65	38,495,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.2	1,226,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.9	3.95	3.85	3.9	2,219,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.34	1,510,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.96	1.9	1.96	335,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	194,100
Keppel Holdings	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	50,000
Medco Holdings	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,320,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	3.95	3.95	3.75	3.75	43,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.56	1.58	1.5	1.58	1,799,000
Pacifica	0.018	0.019	0.018	0.019	3,100,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	300,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	3,300,000
SM Investments Corp.	327.5	327.5	322.5	322.5	281,790
South China Resources Inc	1.18	1.18	1.1	1.1	102,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.62	1.7	1.54	1.54	300,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	2,150,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.135	3,910,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	15.75	16	15.5	16	12,667,600
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	410,000
Belle Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.16	4,532,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.58	1.64	419,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	6,350,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	265,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.46	1.48	1.44	1.46	110,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,710,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	360,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.54	0.55	27,390,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.54	1.58	1.54	1.58	643,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.66	1.68	1.64	1.66	20,348,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	400,000
Interport Res.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	40,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	3,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.47	3,300,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	1,310,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	5	5.4	4.95	5.4	1,165,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	200,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	2,020,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	15.75	15.75	15.75	15.75	1,034,400
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.65	0.66	0.63	0.64	4,000,000
Sm Development Corp.	2.75	2.9	2.7	2.9	5,142,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc.	11	11.75	11	11.75	11,397,200
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.58	0.61	0.58	0.61	90,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.1	4,570,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	20	20	19.5	19.75	11,500
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.88	2.04	1.88	2.02	15,423,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1280	1280	1240	1280	65,190
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.9	3,031,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co	2560	2560	2500	2545	823,700
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.225	0.235	44,420,000
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	1,100,000
Ionics Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.18	2.18	238,000
Ipvg Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	98,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.0525	0.055	2,200,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	1,000,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	14,000
Transpacific Broadband	1.92	2	1.86	2	1,095,000
Philweb Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.031	.032 1	8,700,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	127,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.32	1.36	1.32	1.36	34,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	22	22	22	22	312,400
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	17,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.98	2	1.96	2	4,500,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.6	5,440,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	100,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.1	2.12	2.1	2.1	818,000
Paxys, Inc.	19	19.5	19	19.5	440,600
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.8	269,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	240,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.011	35,400,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.7	1,635,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.2	9.3	9.2	9.3	33,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	23,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	5,130,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	4,780,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	374,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	168,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	.014 1	53,400,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.8	3.95	3.8	3.9	10,851,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	18.5	18.5	18	18.25	173,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.78	0.82	0.78	0.82	5,450,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.54	1.56	1.52	1.54	985,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	1,230,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	528,200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	137,400,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.14	1,419,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.16	1,007,000
PNOC Exploration Corp.-B	24	24	24	24	2,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	9.9	10	9.9	9.9	127,000

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Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

BUSINESS *Friday*

Phone firm sings new tune to play catch-up

Nokia uses music to tap market Sony Ericsson has been capturing

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE QUICKEST WAY to the youth's fickle heart is through their ears.

This why Nokia (Philippines) Inc. put an events showcase on the road late last year to entice buyers from the 15-25 age bracket to try out, and of course buy, one of its new phones designed specifically with music in mind.

These phones include the Nokia 5300 XpressMusic, a compact sliding phone that holds up to 1,500 songs, has dedicated music keys and can synchronize tunes with a personal computer; the Nokia 6233 Music Edition that comes bundled with a 512MB microSD card and the Nokia 5200 and Nokia 3250 Xpress Music with its unique "twist" design.

The top-line N Series also got a makeover to suit the music lovers' taste.

The new Nokia N91 has an 8-gigabyte space that can store up to 6,000 songs and because of its top-range speakers, the music comes out with full bass and treble.

The Nokia N73, on the other hand has 2GB of memory and integrated stereo speakers while the Nokia N70 Music Edition has 1GB of memory, and also has dedicated music keys for quick access to the music library.

All these phones likewise have the requisite camera functions, MP4 camcorder and FM radio player, and yes, can call and send text messages, too.

Realizing that it is not enough to brag about the phones' features, Nokia invested in school tours and held parties all over Metro Manila to forge a closer relationship with its target market.

"For our market to grow, we must be able to bond with the youth," explains Nokia marketing manager Grace del Callar.

Nokia is playing catch-up since one of its competitors, Sony Ericsson, was the early mover in the music category, helped along by the phone maker's association with the revered Walkman music brand of Japan's Sony Corp.

Last December 16, Nokia hosted the Sound Trip, which featured five parties in different venues in just one night, so that followers of one type of music—jazz, rock, hip hop or disco, can party together.

It even hosted the country's first dawn party that ran from 6 to 11 in the morning, in honor of the growing number of call center agents, who end their shift at around 5 in the morning.

IT'S not enough to brag about a phones' features, one needs to develop relationships with target market.

Nokia has also tied-up with Airborne Access in a promotion wherein buyers of the Nokia music phones will get free one-hour access in over 400 hot spots all over the Philippines powered by Airborne Access.

These programs are part of the Asia-wide campaign of Nokia to get a sizable share of the market looking for combination phone and music devices.

In 2005, Nokia introduced Visual Radio, where listeners can get information on artists they are listening to. Some 12 operators and 26 radio stations have signed for Visual Radio.

Nokia has also tapped musicians such as Brian Eno to write the soundtrack to the Nokia 8800 Sirocco Edition and compose polyphonic tunes for loading on the Nokia phones.

Del Callar tells the INQUIRER that Nokia has to seriously look at getting the loyalty of the youth market because of its sheer size, especially in the Philippines where almost half of the population is below 21 years old.

She adds that while marketing campaigns before focused on the specific features of a phone—such as the camera, memory size, Bluetooth connectivity—the new ones talk about phones doing a whole range of things—like a Swiss knife.

"With so many phones out in the market, the youth is exposed to a whole range. So they want to have everything in their phone," she says.

But it is music that is on top of their list of must-haves in their phones, and Nokia does not see this trend changing anytime soon.

FCDU Taxation: Revisited

By Czarina R. Miranda and Jose A. Osana
SGV & Co

TAX-FILES

THE CREATION OF THE FOREIGN CURRENCY Deposit Unit (FCDU) is said to have benefited the country since it increased our links with foreign lenders, enabling the flow of desired investments into the Philippines, creating employment opportunities and expertise in international finance, and contributing to the national development effort.

The FCDU is an account a bank which has been authorized by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to operate under the expanded foreign currency deposit system. Under this system, BSP-qualified depository banks may obtain foreign currency loans from and may conduct foreign currency transactions with residents, non-residents, offshore banking units (OBUs) in the Philippines and other FCDUs.

From the time of its creation in September 1976 under Presidential Decree No. 1035, the taxation of FCDUs has evolved over the years.

Governing laws

Prior to 1998 (period covered by PD 1035, as amended) and then again, beginning May 21, 2004, when Republic Act No. 9294 became effective, income derived by FCDUs from foreign currency transactions with nonresidents, OBUs in the Philippines, local commercial banks, including branches of foreign banks that may be authorized by the BSP to transact business with FCDUs and other depository banks under the expanded foreign currency deposit system are exempt from all taxes, except net income from such transactions as may be specified by the secretary of finance, upon recommendation by the Monetary Board, to be subject to the regular income tax payable by banks. On the other hand, interest income from foreign currency loans granted by FCDUs to residents, other than OBUs in the Philippines or other depository banks under the expanded system are subject to a final tax at the rate of 10 percent.

From 1998 to May 20, 2004, however, the Tax Reform Act (TRA) of 1997 has subjected to a 10 percent final tax the offshore income previously exempt, namely, income derived by an FCDU from foreign currency transactions with local commercial banks including branches of foreign banks that may be authorized by the BSP to transact business with FCDUs and other depository banks under the expanded foreign currency deposit system.

The TRA also retained the 10-percent final tax on interest income from foreign currency loans granted by such FCDUs to residents. However, the TRA has apparently deleted or failed to mention the treatment of income derived by the FCDUs from foreign currency transactions with non-residents. Prior to the TRA, such income was exempt from income tax as offshore income of the FCDU. To cure the inadvertence, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) issued Revenue Regulations No. 10-98 which provides that income of the FCDU from foreign currency transactions with non-residents of the Philippines will not be subject to income tax.

Thus, FCDUs, insofar as foreign currency transactions with OBUs, local commercial banks, including branches of foreign banks that may be authorized by the BSP to transact business with FCDUs, are exempt from the 10-percent final tax before 1998 and after May 20, 2004, but subject to the 10-percent tax from 1998 to May 20, 2004. There is no difference in the tax treatment under the foregoing laws with respect to interest income on loans earned by FCDUs from residents other than the above, or those earned from non-residents, since these are subject to 10 percent tax or exempt, respectively, since the time of the FCDUs' creation.

Business seminars set

LEARN THE TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW ON how to make different soaps and start your own business. Or learn fresh flower arrangement in a one-day seminar.

The Golden Treasure Skills and Development Program will conduct the one-day seminar on soap-making on Jan. 13, Saturday, at the College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD) Magsaysay Avenue, corner Ylanan Street, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are sourcing of materials, costing. Participants will get to experience on how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all purpose soap, bar detergent soap, herbal bath soap (papaya, kalamansi, cucumber, oatmeal etc.) powder soap, bonus courses are liquid bleach, tile and bowl cleaner, fabric softener, car shampoo and how to process virgin coconut oil for soap. Participants will receive certificates of training right after the seminar. All the materials will be provided.

The flower arrangement workshop will also be on Jan. 13 at the Vermont Blooms Unlimited at 9 Anonas Rd., Proj. 3, Quezon City from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

To be discussed are sourcing of materials, costing etc.. There will be a hands-on experience on how to make long and low arrangement.

Call 952-40-28, 436-78-26, 913- 65-51 or 951-29-66.

STARTING THEM YOUNG. Some 50 children of Pfizer employees went around the company's departments last December singing Christmas carols to raise donations for Typhoon "Reming" victims in Bicol. The activity was part of Pfizer's "Kawang Gawa" for kids, which is part of the firm's corporate social responsibility policy.

Aquarium fishes give color to villager's life

By Marlon Alexander Luistro
Inquirer Southern Luzon

ALITAGTAG, BATANgas—It all began when Arman Anodin with 33 other townsfolk attended the 1st Training on Ornamental Fish Breeding and Culture sponsored by the National Fisheries and Biological Center (NFBC) of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in August 2003.

Success stories from successful ornamental aquarium fish traders who also attended during the activity inspired Anodin to venture into the aquarium fish trade.

Worldwide export for aquarium fishes at that time was high at $1.8 million per ton compared to food fishes whose freight on board value reached just $2,700 per metric ton, according to BFAR.

Criticisms

Starting a business, however, in a place where most people were jobless, earned criticisms for Anodin.

"When I was starting to dig holes in my backyard and lining up canvass, people were asking me whose remains I would bury in that pit. People never believed that fishes could bear and grow their young in backyard setting," Anodin says.

Others joked, "Why will you raise fishes that you won't eat anyway?"

Today, Anodin is the leading exporter of guppy fishes to Bio Research pet shops nationwide, supplying at least 7,000 heads every two weeks depending on the store's delivery quota.

He and 41 other members of the Fisherman Marketing Cooperative of Alitagtag now own a pet shop subsidized by the municipal government of Alitagtag.

A guppy is a small brightly colored tropical fish.

Male guppies sell for P3 a piece while females go for P2.50 a piece. Both are both sold in volumes of 100, 300 and 500 heads.

Variations

Guppies belong to the family of *Poecilidae* and are among the most popular aquarium pets in the world.

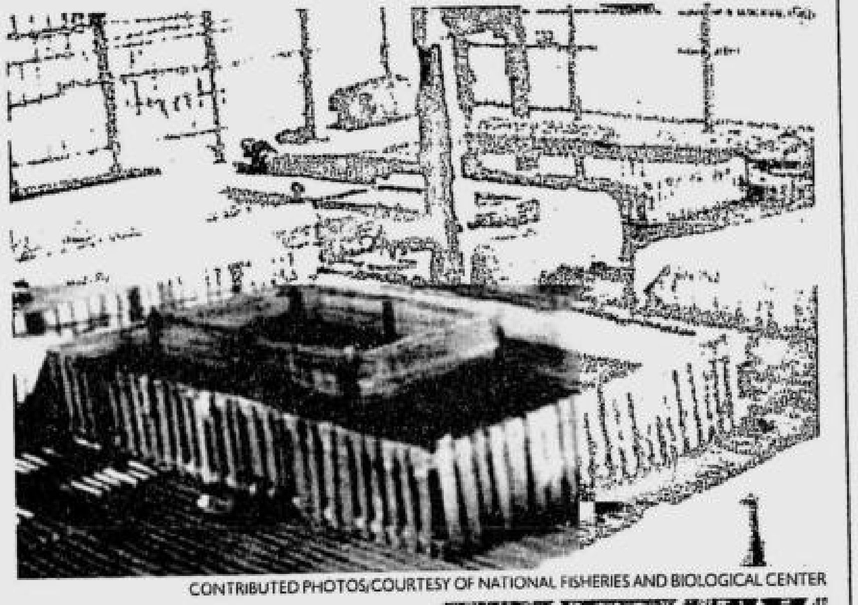
They are noted for their ability to produce appearance variations ranging from color consistency and tails.

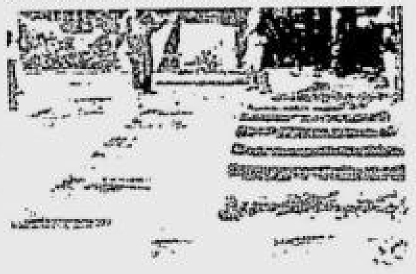
Females grow up to 4 centimeters length while males at 2½-3 cm.

Sourced from Central America and South America, these small, colorful aquarium fishes are live bearers, which immediately bear young fishes instead of hatching eggs.

Guppies can both grow in fresh water and aquarium fishes and new color varieties can be created through experimental breeding, which interests hobbyists.

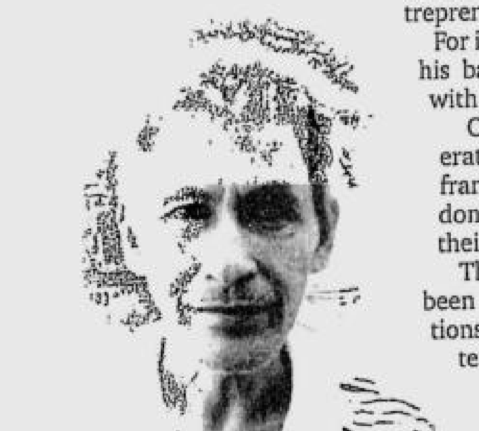
Imported guppy types include red metallic guppy, blue diamond, red blonde and snakeskin guppy, whose names and colors speak for their characteristics.


CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS/COURTESY OF NATIONAL FISHERIES AND BIOLOGICAL CENTER


INNOVATIVE fish ponds of bamboo frames lined with plastic canvass, water filter using plastic soft drink bottles and foam, dug out holes lined with plastic canvass made by Arman Anodin and other trainees.

P100 capital

Anodin finished a vocational agriculture course at Mindanao State University in 1975.


FISHERMAN Marketing Cooperative of Alitagtag (Fimcoa) head Arman Anodin.
MARLON ALEXANDER LUISTRO/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Although he majored in fisheries, he ventured into upholstery for several years earning P1,000–P5,000 monthly.

After realizing the potentials of aquarium fish from NFBC's training, he started his business in August 2003.

Anodin started with only P100, several plastic bags and five guppy breeders to raise the fish in his backyard.

NFBC experts recognized that Barangay Tadlac's topography was not ideal enough to grow fishes.

The village soil itself does not hold water and water from the town is available only every other day.

Arman and other training participants came up with their own models and pioneering pond structures to solve such problems.

The models are very practical and cheap for small and start-up entrepreneurs.

For instance, Anodin dug holes in his backyard, which he lined up with canvass to hold water.

Other trainees used old refrigerators, old bath tubs, bamboo frames, boxes and even abandoned piggery farms to make their own fish ponds.

The lowly plastic bottle has been recycled for several functions: Water filter device, rain water collection system, incubator for hatching artemia, live food for aquarium fishes.

Within three days, Arman's five guppies were bearing fries.

In one month, the breeders continued to bear hundreds of fishes, to mature in 3 to 4 months, ready for sale in pet shops.

"When I started to see the fishes grow, I was so overwhelmed. Every time I look at them in my aquarium, all my problems, worries and illnesses are gone," Arman says.

His guppy business has added P8,000–P30,000 to his monthly income.

Success stories from Arman inspired other people in Alitagtag and neighboring towns to follow his footsteps and started raising aquarium fishes in their respective yards.

JAIME PAUNIL VALENCIA, JR.

(LT. COL., AFP JAGS, RET.)

65 years old, born on December 1, 1941,
quietly passed away to return
to his Creator on December 30, 2006.

He breathed his last, surrounded by his wife, **Zenaida "AYDS" Bustos Valencia**, sons and daughters-in-law, **Jason** and **Cherry**, **Jerome** and **Chinky**, **John**, daughter **Joanne Kristine** and **Cedric**, grandchildren **Ysa**, **Aidan**, **Carlos**, **Bea** and **Jaime Cyril**. Also beside him at the end of his journey were his sisters, **Sandra V. del Prado**, **Sonya V. Belmonte**, **Sarah V. Peliño**, **Jacqui Valencia** and **Stella Valencia**, brothers, **Jesse P. Valencia**, **Jerry Valencia**, brother-in-law, **Willie Peliño**.

His parents-in-law, **Elmer** and **Salome Bustos**, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law **Johnny** and **Delly**, **Marissa** and **Ed Bongat**, **Elmer** and **Vangie**, **Marlene** and **Gerry Cacnio**, **Mar** and **Jinky**, **Ray** and **Naty** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of our dear Jun Valencia's soul.

His remains will be transferred to the St. Ignatius Cathedral, AFP Mortuary, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City at 1pm today, January 5, 2007. Burial will be at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig tomorrow, Jan. 6, 2007 at 9am.

CESAR I. AGUILAR

Malabon and Quezon City
November 6, 1945 - January 3, 2007

Retired Airbus 340/330 Captain
Philippine Airlines

Has joined his loving and merciful God.

His wife **Veronica (Nene) Fernandez** and only child **Dr. Warren**, daughter-in-law **Hazel** and grandchild **Mika** and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremains will be brought to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Broadway St., New Manila, Quezon City on January 5, 2007 at 6:00 p.m.

Funeral Mass will be on January 7, 2007 at 2:30 in the afternoon. Inurnment will follow at the Columbary of Sto. Niño de Cebu, San Agustin Seminary, Fisheries St., Visayas Ave., Quezon City.

Suscipe me, Domine, secundum eloquium tuum et vivam,
et non confundas me ab exspectatione mea – Ps. 119, v. 116

PAX

REV. ROBERTO J. DE JESUS, O.S.B.

A monk and priest of the Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat, Manila, strengthened by the sacraments, died on January 2, 2007 at the age of 76 in the 50th year of his monastic profession and the 45th year of his priesthood.

The **Rt. Rev. Tarcisio Ma. H. Narciso, O.S.B.**, **Abbot**, and the monks of the Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat, his sisters and brother and their families: **Corazon** and **Vicente Jayme**, children **Fortunato**, **Vicente Jr.**, **Regina**, **Edgardo**, **Jocelyn**, **Hernando** and **Anna Maria**; **Esther** and (†) **Jesus Oledan**, children **Jose**, **Javier**, **Eloisa**, and **Joaquin**; **Rufino** and **Marie Jacinto**, children **Jojo**, **Joey**, **Jerome** and **Jennifer**, other relatives and friends, and his fellow workers: administrators, faculty, and service personnel of San Beda College (Manila) and San Beda College (Alabang), request their friends to join them in their prayers for his eternal rest.

His remains lie in state at the Abbey Church. The Office of the Dead will be celebrated for him today, January 5. The Funeral Mass will be celebrated tomorrow, January 6, at 9:00 in the morning in the Abbey Church, after which his remains will be cremated at the Heritage Park Cemetery, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. His ashes will be interred at the Abbey Ossuary.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

MARIA JISON LOPEZ VDA. DE LOPEZ

"Marucha"

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on November 27, 2006

wish to express our deepest appreciation to all of you, our friends near and far, who sent flowers, mass cards, letters of sympathy, spent precious time with us, and expressed in many other ways your love, concern and support during our time of greatest sorrow

---

Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

Estelita Rapatan Marte

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on January 2, 2007 at the age of 85.

Her bereaved family, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Joseph Chapel, Mt. Carmel Shrine, New Manila, Quezon City.

Funeral Mass on January 6, 2007, Saturday. Cremation at 1:00 p.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City. Inurnment at Mt. Carmel Shrine Crypt.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."

2 Corinthians 5:8

2ND DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF

VIRGILIO V. VERZO

who died January 5, 2005

Mass to be held today, January 5, 2007, 6:00 a.m.
at Parish of St. Jerome Emiliani, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

CLASSIFIEDS

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE
CENRO-WEST, Lantawan
Pasonanca, Zamboanga City

LEASE OF PUBLIC LANDS

Notice is hereby given that the CENRO-WEST, Lantawan, Pasonanca, Zamboanga City will Lease to the highest bidder at 10:00 A.M. on March 15, 2007, the tract of land covered by Miscellaneous Lease Application No. 097332-21 of Concepcion L. Balaguer.

Location : Calarian, Zamboanga City
Description : MLI 0973322-000021
Area : 5,390 square meters
Appraised value of the land : Php 1,078,000.00
Total appraised value of the property : Php 14,552,483.04

All bids must be sealed and submitted to the Office of the CENR-WEST, at Lantawan, Pasonanca, Zamboanga City on or before the hour and date stated above and plainly "Bid for the Land described in MLI 097332-21." Bids must be accompanied with cash money order, treasury warrant, certified check, cashier's check for a sum equivalent to ten percentum (10%) of the bid. When a bid is withdrawn after the highest bidder is determined, the corresponding deposit thereof shall be forfeited to the government. No bid shall be less than the appraised value of the land. This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

(Sgd.) TITO L. GADON

(PDI-Dec. 22, 29, 2006; Jan. 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2007)

PUBLIC SAFETY SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION, INC.
Ground Floor, Kiangan Hall
Camp Crame, Quezon City

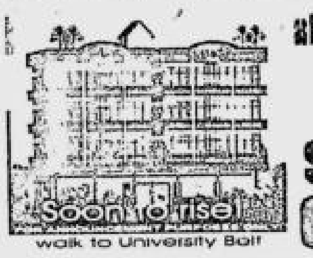
NOTICE of ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Membership Meeting of the PSSLAI for the year 2007 will be held on Saturday, 20 January 2007, at 8:30 A.M. at the PNP Multi-Purpose Center, Camp Crame, Quezon City.

For inquiries please contact PSSLAI at 02-7232957.

(PDI – January 5, 2007)

CALL POEA
24-HOUR HOTLINES
722-1144 or 722-1155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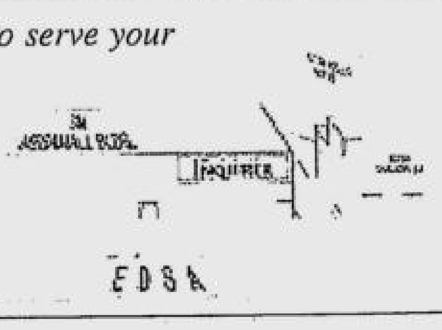

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
PEOPLESUPPORT (PHILIPPINES) INC. PeopleSupport Center, Ayala Ave. cor. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Parikshat Nagpal	Senior Manager, Forcedesk
PHIL-NEW INDIA LENDING INVESTOR & TRADING CO. No. 43-A Sibuyan St., Doña Josefa, Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City	Prabhdeep Singh	Finance Manager
XP MEDIA ASIA PACIFIC LIMITED CORPORATION 2402 PSE Bldg., Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Sung Won Park	Sales Manager
ASSI PHILS. TRADING CORPORATION Stall 420 Bldg. 4, FTI Complex, Bicutan, Taguig	Gilsu Jung	Sales Manager
REUTERS PHILIPPINES LIMITED 18/F The Enterprise Center Tower I, Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Rajamani Gopalakrishnan	Bureau Chief, Manila

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Jan. 5, 2007)

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
GUAGUA, PAMPANGA

January 4, 2007

INVITATION TO BID

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (PELCO II) WITH OFFICE ADDRESS AT SAN ROQUE, GUAGUA, PAMPANGA IS PRESENTLY NEED OF THIRTY SEVEN (37) STRONG SECURITY GUARDS FROM A LICENSED SECURITY AGENCY.

Interested Parties are therefore invited to attend the Pre-Bid Conference on **January 11, 2007 at 10:30 A.M.** to be held at Pelco II Board Room, San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga, to discuss details of the bid. **Security Agency who should fail to attend the pre-bid conference shall be disqualified in the bidding proper.**

SUBMISSION AND OPENING OF BIDS SHALL BE HELD ON JANUARY 18, 2007 AT 10:30 A.M. SHARP AT THE PELCO II BOARD ROOM, SAN ROQUE, GUAGUA, PAMPANGA. HENCE, LATE COMERS SHALL NOT BE HONORED BY THE PBAC. ONLY ACCREDITED AGENCIES SHALL BE HONORED IN THE BIDDING. THEREFORE, ALL SECURITY AGENCIES WHO ARE NOT DULY ACCREDITED BY THIS OFFICE ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS AND PAY THE AMOUNT OF ONE THOUSAND (P1,000.00) PESOS AS ACCREDITATION FEE. FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION, PLEASE CONTACT OR VISIT ENGR. RAUL L. CANLAS, CHAIRMAN OF THE PBAC, CELPHONE NO. 0920-918-5464 OR LANDLINE TEL. # (045) 900-2650.

Accreditation Requirements:

1. Business Registration Certificate from the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC)
2. Security Agency License from PNP-SAGSD
3. Membership Certificate from PADPAO
4. Company's Profile
    a. No. of Licensed Working Security Guards
    b. List of past and existing clients (Please indicate the name, address, contact nos. and no. of security guards)
    c. Other valid information of the Security Agency
5. Latest Income Tax Return for three (3) years
6. Audited Financial Statement for three (3) years

(Sgd.) ENGR. RAUL L. CANLAS
PBAC Chairperson

Noted by:

(Sgd.) MR. SULPICIO C. LAGARDE, JR.
General Manager

(PDI - Jan. 5 & 7, 2007)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
PO Box 2102 MCPO Tel. Nos. 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No. 840-1575

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

ENGAGEMENT OF A QUALIFIED CONTRACTOR TO SUPPLY THE REQUIRED LABOR, SPARE PARTS AND SUPERVISION IN OVERHAULING PNOC-EDC OWNED BJ CEMENTING UNIT EDC06-182

The Approved Budget is P2,710,000.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 120 calendar days.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o G. F. Cueno) starting **January 5, 2007** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Three Hundred (P300.00).

For the purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **January 12, 2007, 10:00 a.m.** at the BAC Room, PNOC-EDC Building 5, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on January 24, 2007** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI - Jan. 5, 2007)

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People, Events & Products

Bringing Yuletide cheer to 200 children

COMPANIES OF THE JG SUMMIT group, in cooperation with Tom's World, treated 200 children to gifts, goodies and games to support the Foundation's "Give a Gift: Alay sa Batang Pinoy" program.

"This is a very touching way to celebrate Christmas," said lawyer Noli del Rosario, head of JG Summit's human resources department. Del Rosario is a volunteer in the JG Summit-GMA 7 Kapuso Foundation "Give-a-Gift" Christmas event, which was recently held at Tom's World in Robinsons Galleria, Pasig.

"JG Summit's focus is youth development. The youth should be cared for because the future of our country rests on them," said Del Rosario. "Our 'Give a Gift' participation is a yearly initiative."

A closer look at the children would reveal that they are malnourished kids placed under the Kapuso Foundation's feeding program. The early Christmas party is a treat to those who overcame malnourishment by achieving a weight gain of not less than 12 pounds.

The affair, which was heavily supported by Robinsons Land Corp, was full of kiddie enjoyment as the children spent a fun-filled time with the employees and management trainees of JG Summit Holdings Inc as well as the team from Kapuso Foundation.

After delighting in the fun rides and arcade games at Tom's World, Angel, Jefferson and the other children were entertained by Kapuso volunteer child stars Ella Guevarra and BJ "Tolits" Forbes as well as Tom's World mascots Tom and Joy. The Children's Library, JG Summit's multi-media learning center, also treated them to a storytelling session and games where they won goodies from Universal Robina Corp (URC) and gift items from Sun Cellular. The children feasted on delicious treats from Ministop, Hot Loops Donuts and URC's Refresh Flavored Drinks.

The event was capped off with distribution of gifts from URC, Ministop, Hot Loops, Robinsons Department Store, Robinsons Supermarket, Cebu Pacific, Digitel LEC, and Chic Centre. Before leaving their playground for the day, Toys R Us mascot Geoffrey the Giraffe presented the children with gifts from Toys R Us.

"We are pleased to be given the opportunity to make children happy through Kapuso Foundation's Give a Gift program. The message of the program is of hope and celebration," said Del Rosario.

Del Rosario added, "this is just the beginning of JG Summit's synergized efforts to mount more programs, all geared towards the development of the youth."

RESERVISTS ON A MEDICAL MISSION

The NCR Command under Brig. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, together with NCR RCDG Commander Col. Danilo Fabian, elements of the 131st Army Reserve Division and a large contingent of multiservice AFP reservists under Col. Jesus G. Cabarrus PAFR, recently conducted its 8th medical mission in Caloocan City, which has a large depressed population, dispensing medical, dental, surgical, optical, deworming, milkfeeding, nutritional products and toys for children to over 2,800 patients of Barangay 117 in Camarin. Shown is Col. Jesus G. Cabarrus PAFR observing Maj. Jaime Cruz and Dr. Robert Ngo with Maj. Norman Aychoco performing surgery on a patient.

Countdown to PCTA Convention 2007 begins

Preparations for the Philippine Cable Television Association (PCTA) Convention 2007 is now in full swing as the Philippine's longest running cable TV industry show gears up for its 15th edition set to unfold from March 28 to 30 at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila. As the country's premier cable TV event, the PCTA Convention 2007 gathers top industry stalwarts to discuss, dissect, and debate on salient industry issues as well as share essential information to work together towards a more sustainable pay television industry.

The PCTA is leaving nothing to chance to ensure another successful year for PCTA Convention 2007. Having highlighted technological advances and regulatory concerns during past conventions, this year's offering poses a challenge to all stakeholders of the Philippine cable environment. Convention overall chair Juno Henares-Chuidian explains, "The theme, 'Ano Na? What's Next?' asks 'Where do we go from here?'. It recognizes the urgent need to involve the general assembly to arrive at true commitments instead of sweeping statements. It seeks to go beyond our borders and learn from the accomplishments and failures of the cable operators throughout the region. It endeavors to transcend our comfort zones to explore new horizons and chart a new course for the trade."

For the third consecutive year, Solar Entertainment Network is the Convention's Platinum sponsor. Also on board is fourth-time Gold sponsor Trinity Broadcasting Network-Asia (TBN), together with Silver sponsors HBO Asia and Cable Box Office Shows and Systems (Cableboss). Not to be left behind are companies that will showcase exciting cable TV programs and the latest equipment such as Creative Programs Inc, Asian Cable Communications Inc (Accion), Ricklee Enterprises, Amity Satellite, CYO International, Conax AS, and Power and Telephone Inc.

Interested parties may call the PCTA secretariat at 638-8541 and 638-8544, or e-mail cableconvention@pcta.org.ph for further inquiries about the event.

'TEPEYAC: OUR LADY OF 'GUADALUPE' REVISITED' LAUNCHED

CentralBooks' president lawyer Jose Agaton R. Sibal (right) led guests at the formal launching of the book 'Tepeyac: Our Lady of 'Guadalupe' Revisited' written by noted author lawyer Ramon A. Pedroza (2nd from right). The delivery of the first exemplar of the book to Mexico was held at the inner courtyard of the San Agustin Museum in Intramuros, Manila and was graced by (from left) Mexican Ambassador to the Philippines Erendira Aracelia Paz Campos, new Philippine Ambassador to Mexico Antonio M. Lagdameo, and Rev. Fr. Pedro Galende, OSA. In his third edition of Tepeyac, Pedroza reexamines the 'Guadalupe' event. Massive research discloses extremely controversial findings such as a non-existent Guadalupe in Mexico-the event happened on the hillock of Tepeyac. In a larger context, the book takes another look at the history of civilizations' three continents and the intervention of the Blessed Mother of God among its peoples. The focus is on the Americas through Mexico, the Asian continent through Las Islas Filipinas, and Europe and her role in a battle for the survival of Christian civilization. The 561-page hardbound Tepeyac books are available at Centralbooks outlets. For more details, call 372-4807, 374-4064, 372-3550 ext. 18; 0917-3884772; e-mail central_bks@yahoo.com or log on to www.central.com.ph.

Making breakfast fit, fast and fun with Nestlé Breakfast Cereals

THE HOLIDAYS ARE OVER AND very soon your kids will be trooping back to school. Mornings are bound to be hectic once again as kids share bathrooms, get dressed, prepare for breakfast and rush off to ride their school bus.

So how do you make mornings easier and more fun at your house? Nestle Breakfast Cereals shares some breakfast tips.

- Make breakfast enjoyable by giving kids an unexpected treat. Put a favorite toy like a stunt plane now found in each box of Nestle Breakfast Cereals, beside their favorite bowl of cereals. It's an added attraction especially for those who try to resist breakfast.
- Breeze over breakfast objections and promise the kids a weekend of excitement. Fill them in on the Nestle Koko Krunch Jets Academy happening at the Market! Market! Jan. 6 and 7. Tickle their imagination and fuel their fun by telling them all about the thrilling activities they can enjoy such as the Chip's Air Escape, Captain Stars Flight Simulator, Koko's Air Chase Maze plus arts and crafts activities on these days. If they've been good, they're entitled to a whole day of fun and adventure. But be sure to keep your promise!
- Kids look up to their moms and dads. So be sure that you are a good example of one who makes time for breakfast. Studies show that kids who jump-start their day by eating breakfast learn better, achieve more, and behave better. That is why having Nestle Koko Krunch at the breakfast table is a welcome boost. No more long waiting periods or tedious breakfast preparations, because all you need is to pour out Nestle Koko Krunch cereals into their bowls and pour in the milk and voila-a quick and easy start up meal that is also wholly nutritious.
- Use weekend breakfasts as bonding time with the family. Have your kids create and fly the stunt planes found in the Nestle Breakfast Cereals medium pack - Koko Krunch, Honey Stars, Milo Breakfast Cereals, Cookie Crisp, Snowflakes and Trix. Collect all six stunt planes and teach your kid the basics on how to become a certified Koko ace pilot!

The celebrations may be over and Santa Claus may have given them gifts for being nice, but you can keep your kids in their happy, holiday mood all year long with fun breakfasts with Nestle Koko Krunch. Share a big hurrah for holiday merry-making with your kids. The fun continues at the Jets Academy at Market! Market! Jan. 6 and 7. Fun starts from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Nestle Koko Krunch Jets Academy is made possible by Nestle Breakfast Cereals in partnership with Market! Market! Co-sponsors for this weekend of adventure are Nestle Fresh Milk, Metro Gaisano, Epson Philippines, Kevin's Toy Shop and Netopia.

Measure granting workers tax break pushed

Structure follows strategy

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

THIS SUNDAY IS THE FEAST OF THE Three Kings. We can learn lessons in governance from a G.K. Chesterton message that, as I recall from my college days, goes something like this:

"One night, out over the stillness of an evening breeze, out over the white-chalked hills of Bethlehem, there came a cry… a gentle cry. The earth did not hear the cry, for the earth slept. The sea did not hear the cry, for the sea was filled with its own voice. But two types of people heard the cry: Wise men, those who know they do not know everything, and humble shepherds, those who know they know nothing. And from that day to this day, only two types of people continue to hear the cry: The wise and the humble."

COMMENTARY

Strategy and structure

A key strategy for governance is ensuring transparency and participation. This requires both wisdom and humility from those in the government. Wisdom is necessary in choosing and building on the suggestions of private sector stakeholders, while humility is needed to adopt recommendations not originating from the government.

Quite often, people start with what they consider as an ideal organizational structure, then they think of how to implement the strategy within this structure.

Research shows that the more effective way is "structure follows strategy." First, you decide what to do (strategy), then design the structure to implement it. What is needed is a commitment to the strategy of transparency and participation, then the political will to formulate the best structure to make it happen.

Last Dec. 28, agricultural and industrial leaders assembled for the first Task Force on Anti-Smuggling meeting with private sector participation. TFAS is chaired by Customs Commissioner Manuel Morales.

Antismuggling applications

We commend Morales and all the BOC people for the 30-percent increase in the agency's revenue collection in 2006. We also appreciate Morales' initiative in asking for private sector participation in TFAS. But the TFAS' structure, by itself, is inadequate in following the desired strategy of transparency and accountability.

In 2003, the government implemented a three-part structure that more effectively followed this strategy. It had the National Anti-Smuggling Task Force which was almost the same as TFAS. But it also had two additional bodies that helped keep the smuggling rate of agricultural products in Metro Manila at only 1 percent from its previous level of 40 percent. These were the Anti-Smuggling Intelligence and Information Center (Asiic) and the Cabinet Oversight Committee against Smuggling (Cocas).

In August 2004, at the height of the antismuggling success, and to the consternation of the private sector, these three bodies were abolished. Predictably, smuggling began to rise again. In November 2004, NASTF was reinstated, but not the Cocas and Asiic.

This partial solution has since failed to duplicate the antismuggling success demonstrated by the prior structure.

National Confederation of Hog Farmers president Albert Lim says, "We cannot rely solely on the BOC for the antismuggling effort. In the recent pork smuggling case, the goods were apprehended outside, not inside, Customs territory. When these smuggled goods were returned inside, some of them 'disappeared.'

"Clearly, while there are many good BOC personnel, other agencies and groups are needed for check and balance. How can the BOC effectively monitor itself? We strongly recommend the restoration of Cocas. If rampant smuggling is not stopped immediately, one of our leaders has proposed a 'pig holiday,' which means no pork deliveries to Metro Manila."

Federation of Philippine Industries president Jesus Aranza also wants Cocas restored. Cocas members were the secretaries of finance, agriculture, trade, transportation and justice. There were also participants from the private sector, with the Alyansa Agrikultura, FPI and the Fair Trade Alliance attending the Cocas biweekly meetings. While the initially suggested TFAS quarterly meetings chaired by the customs commissioner are appreciated, Aranza says, "This cannot be a substitute for the Cocas, which, because of its very structure and past performance record, is absolutely necessary to produce more far-reaching results."

Recommendation

Records show there is a difference of $10 billion between what the exporting countries report to us and what the Bureau of Customs says we receive from them. At an assumed 12 percent VAT and an average tariff of 5 percent, this means a potential loss of more than P80 billion in yearly revenue. It is hoped that our government officials are guided by the wisdom and humility G. K. Chesterton wrote about, and hear the cry for the Cocas' restoration. This added structure will best follow the desired strategy of ensuring transparency and accountability in our fight against smuggling.

(The author is Agriwatch chair and former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax (02) 8522112)

DOF's proposed relief to cover only minimum wage earners

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE IS ASKING Congress to make permanent the temporary income tax relief earlier given to minimum wage earners.

The reprieve, granted on Jan. 1, 2006 through a revenue regulation, was good for only one year. The regulation did not provide minimum wage earners outright exemption from payment of income tax but only directed employers to suspend collection of withholding tax from them for the whole year. This was aimed at helping workers cope with the increase in the value added tax rate and the adverse effects of the rising cost of fuel.

According to finance officials, Congress has to pass a pending bill that seeks to exempt permanently minimum wage earners from paying income tax. The measure, according to them, needs to be approved before April 15, the deadline for filing income tax, otherwise, minimum wage earners will have to pay their accumulated tax obligations for 2006 on or before that date.

Covered by the temporary relief are those receiving monthly income of P5,000 and below.

The VAT Reform law expanded the coverage of the tax to include oil and electricity and raised the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent.

A source from the department said the government would lose some P500 million in revenue collection a year if the income tax exemption was made permanent.

But the source said the DOF was supporting the bill, noting that the improved fiscal position of the government would allow it to grant minimum wage earners income tax reprieve.

The DOF was earlier asked by the Palace to study the feasibility of expanding the coverage of the tax break to include middle income individuals. Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, however, said the DOF would be supporting only the tax break for minimum wage earners for now.

"Talks on expanding the coverage of the tax break should be held only when the government has already achieved a zero budget deficit," an official said.

The DOF has set a target of wiping out the budget deficit by 2008. For 2006, the deficit was expected to reach P80 billion to P90 billion.

UA&P sees '07 inflation at 4.7%

GLOBAL OIL PRICES ARE EXPECTED TO FALL below $60 a barrel this year, supporting a further slowdown in the increase in the prices of goods in the domestic market.

This was the forecast made by the University of Asia & the Pacific in its press briefing yesterday.

In its projection, the average inflation rate for 2007 will settle at only 4.5 percent, consistent with the government's target.

The inflation rate stood at 4.7 percent last November, the lowest since June 2004.

The country imports at least 90 percent of its oil requirements. Domestic commodity prices are therefore highly dependent on the cost of imported oil.

A study made by UA&P economist Bernardo Villegas and presented by fellow economist Peter Lee showed that the expected decline in oil prices this year was anchored on projections that demand for oil would start to decelerate.

Dubai crude, the benchmark used in setting domestic oil prices, averaged at $61.48 a barrel in 2006 after hitting a record high of close to $70 a barrel last August.

Spike in oil prices was blamed on supply disruptions due to conflicts in the Middle East, a major source of oil, and moves of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) to jack up prices.

According to the study, the growth in the global demand for oil is seen to slow down this year amid efforts of governments to seek alternative sources of fuel. *Michelle V. Remo*

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LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
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Sunday
A pretty linen dress is perfect for Sunday get-togethers with the family.

Monday
A chic blazer is de rigueur when climbing the corporate ladder.

Tuesday
An ultra-feminine eyelet dress is just the right getup when meeting up with the girls for lunch.

Keeping it real

MOST WOMEN WITH A keen sense of style know how to keep things simple and effortlessly chic. Being fashionable doesn't mean one has to dress outrageously in the latest trends, after all. The key: Choosing a wardrobe that's sharply edited to suit one's lifestyle and personality.

Max Studio understands real women's needs. So, for spring/summer 2007, the designer presented a collection of clean, modern and relaxed pieces that can form the backbone of any woman's stylish wardrobe.

The easy-to-wear collection is mostly neutral in color. Shades of chocolate brown and white dominate, with shocks of signature printed silks in pink and lime green. Meanwhile, classic black is interpreted through an assortment of far-from-boring pieces. Max chooses to innovate through material and cut while focusing on the integrity of his construction, as seen in this season's perfectly fitted cargo pants and classic bias-cut slip dresses.

To make it easier for busy, modern women to strategically organize their wardrobes, the collection is presented through the days of the week. From silk printed slip dresses for a Saturday girls' night out, to crisp and pretty linen numbers for Sunday brunch, to soft jersey knits and suits for business Monday, and so on. There are even comfy cargos and luxe sportswear for more casual days, and LBDs in various reincarnations for cocktail or date nights.

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Wednesday
A flirty chiffon number is perfect for cocktails.

Thursday
Casual shorts are required when running errands.

Friday
A subtly sexy jersey halter dress is a date-night must-have!

Saturday
A brightly printed silk tunic worn with jeans is ideal for those girls' nights out.

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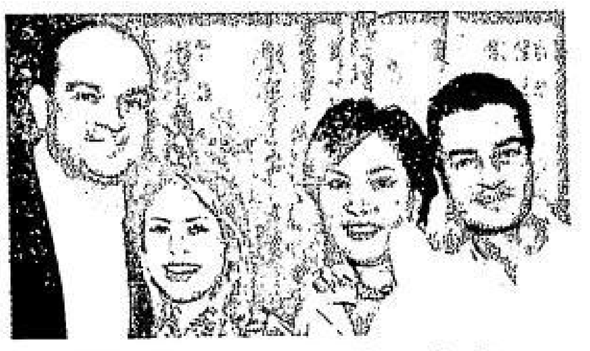
ALL IN THE *FAMILLE*: The birthday boy's cousin, Marissa Oca; Cecille Oca Lacson; Lisa Oca; Rica Bagatsing; the birthday boy's mother, Tessie Oca Prieto, and brother Robert San Diego

BUSINESSMAN Sinai Djemal, bag designer Bea Valdes and steady escort Archie Rodriguez, and Rosanne Prieto

KNIT queen Lulu Tan Gan, ultra-glam Vicky Zubiri; fashionable Sigalit Djemal and renowned makeup artist Patrick Rosas

BUSINESSMAN Sander Tantoco; Malacañang social secretary Bettina Araneta Aboitiz; *moi*; socialite Mely Hechanova; and Marybeth de Leon

SHOPWISE'S Crickette and Donnie Tantoco, Delbros' Ed and Margarita Delgado, Sharmila H. and international businessman Haresh Hiranand



SHANGRI-LA Hotel Makati's GM, popular Greg Dogan; vivacious Tessa Prieto Valdes; Shang Makati's director of communications Joy Wassmer; and Shang Kuala Lumpur's well-loved GM Jarlath Lynch

Joint birthday bash gathers high society and show-biz world

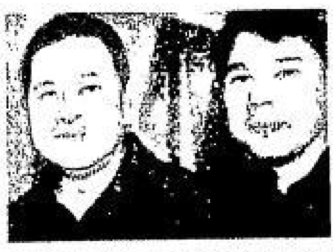
POPS with mom, forever youthful Dulce Lucban, and Jocelyn Fernandez

SUPER stylish Leica Carpo, Doodie Tuason and Cirkulo's Malou Gamboa

ENGAGED COUPLE. Architect Anna Sy and Hong Kong Citibank's Steve Lawrence

CEBU'S dazzling Amparito Lhuillier

FASHION plate Mons Romulo Tantoco

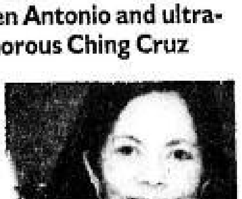


BENCH International owner and gentleman with the golden heart, Ben Chan, and popular architect Miguel Pastor

POPULAR business man Fred Uytengsu

EYE-CATCHING Jackie Cohen Antonio and ultra-glamorous Ching Cruz

MAGSAYSAY Lines' top woman Doris Magsaysay Ho



BANTAY Bata's Gina Lopez

SUPER BEST PALS, GORGEOUS CONcert queen **Pops Fernandez** and Philippine Tatler workasonic mega-editor **Anton San Diego**, celebrated their 40th birthday together with a fabulous bash.

Pops and Anton had been classmates since first grade at the International School, and have been bosom friends all these years. To mark a milestone in their life, they decided to hold a joint celebration that was, believe me, definitely one of the most fun events of this year!

The happening took place at Makati Shangri-La's famous Conway Bar, which was closed for the *tres* private party, and was transformed into the most chic, super high-end bar ever seen in town, *palanggas*.

Playing the superb fun emcee was none other than the traffic-stopper herself, Tessa **Prieto Valdes**, who was looking so fashionably slim.

The program started with great singing by top soprano **Karla Gutierrez**. She was followed by one of my favorite singers, **May Bayot**, whose singing can lift you off your seat and make you scream for "more! more! more!" She was followed by the pristine voice of the adorable **Cris Villonco**.

The talented Steps dancers did a fantastic revue from "Saturday Night Fever." This was a special present by none other than **Sofia Zobel Elizalde**. *Après* this, out of nowhere, a **Diana Ross** impersonator appeared, followed by a **Cher** impersonator; they rocked the stage with the fab hits of the two divas. They also danced with the hotshot guests such as Bukidnon Gov. **Joe Zubiri**, Citibank's **Steve Lawrence**, **Tessa PV**, **Crickette Tantoco** and **Maryann Cuenca Tinio**.

The dancing made the crowd even more ecstatic. Not to mention there was overflowing bubbly champagne, thanks to **Olga Azarcon** of Moet-Hennesy.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

Naturellement, celebrator Pops obliged with a song. She was joined later by her aunt, the beautiful **Helen Gamboa Sotto**. The birthday boy, who loves to sing, obliged the crowd that had screamed for him to sing.

By 10 p.m., most guests had arrived, such as handsome businessman and triathlete **Fred Uytengsu**; gorgeous **Dulce Lucban**, mother of Pops; my vivacious pal **Tessie Oca Prieto**; Shangri-La's super asset **Jarlath Lynch**, who had jetted in from Kuala Lumpur; and Hong Kong society's elegant woman of substance, **Bonnie Gokson**.

Gokson joined her close pals, shipping heiress **Doris Magsaysay Ho** and **Gina Lopez** of ABS-CBN Foundation.

Also there were beautiful couple **Sander** and **Mons Tantoco**; glamorous gals **Vicky Zubiri**, **Ching Cruz**, **Doody Tuason**, **Amparito Lhuillier**, **Sigalit Djemal**, **Nini Licaros**, **Crickette Tantoco** and **Anna Ugarte**.

GORGEOUS concert queen Pops Fernandez and Philippine Tatler's mega editor in chief Anton San Diego

Bea Valdes, **Lulu Tan Gan** were among the tons of beautiful people who rocked the dance floor as the fantastic band About Eve played '70s and '80s songs. Superb DJ **Kokoy Puyat** later followed, playing swell music.

What was so fantastic about the party was that major show-biz personalities, politicians and high-society hotshots mingled. There she was, the Star of Stars, adorable, eye-catching **Mayor Vilma Santos Recto**!

Also there were **Gina de Venecia**; Shangri-La's well-loved GM **Greg Dogan** and the hotel's top asset, cyber-smart **Joy Wassmer**; Sen. **Jinggoy Ejercito**; business magnate **Ed Delgado** and **Margarita Delgado**; Shopwise's young mega-achievers **Donnie** and **Crickette Tantoco**; head-turner **Gretchen Barretto**; **Zsa Zsa Padilla**; my *palangga*, **Dolly Ann Carvajal**; high society's **Renna Hechanova Angeles** and society's grand dame **Mely Concepcion Hechanova**; handsome **Rudy Fernandez**; **Marivic Madrigal Vasquez**; **Carol Garcia** and escort Rep. **Charlie Cojuangco**; dazzling **Regine Velasquez**; fun, witty **Ogie Alcasid**; and even Mother **Lily Monteverde**.

Everyone had such a smashing time. We started to stagger out past 3 a.m. and *moi* would like to wish Pops, who looked so happy that night with her beau, that super nice movie actor and Bench model **Jomari Yllana**, and, *naturellement*, my close, adorable pal Anton tons of success and the best in the world for you two who are the best dahlings.

Cheers, *palanggas*.

HONG KONG'S mega socialite Bonnie Gokson

CHARITY-ORIENTED stylish woman, Nini Licaros

THE ABSOLUTELY loveable singer Regine Velasquez with Harrison Plaza's and Philippine Tatler's mega publisher, Irene Martel Francisco

WOMAN for all seasons, popular Mayor Vilma Santos Recto

New FCCP board

Twenty-seven years ago, philanthropist, author and civic leader **Chito Madrigal Collantes** founded the Friends for Cultural Concerns of the Philippines (FCCP).

Today there are over 200 hardworking charity-oriented members of the FCCP, *palanggas*. Among them are Dr. **Jaime Laya** (former NCCA chair); Dr. **Raul Sunico**, (dean of the UST Conservatory of Music); **Chloe Romulo-Periquet**; **Martin Lopez**; **Tessie Luz**, plus tons of other luminaries on the culture scene.

Chito C. is chair of the board. The new president is **Lulu Castañeda**.

Recently the FCCP's new board had an early evening musical soiree which featured some of the country's brilliant performers such as young violinists **Justin Texon** and **Jareena Inacay**, and pianist and music professor **Greg Zuniega**. Justin T. and Jareena I. are both Predis scholars of the FCCP, no less, dahlings.

Fabulous pianist **Aima Labra Makk**, who is based in Austria, had the hotshots on the edge of their seats with her bravura performance on the brand-new Steinway grand piano of Chito Collantes which, according to Dean Sunico, "is the best piano in the whole country."

As always, as in most of the FCCP's chill-out happenings, the night was a major success, *palanggas*.

SOTTO headturners. The adorable Helen Gamboa with daughters Apple, Lala and Ciara Sotto

POPS and pals. Action star Rudy Fernandez, Joyce Jimenez, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, Gretchen Barretto and Girlie Rodis

FABULOUS concert pianist Aima Labra Makk

CES Manalo; Myrna Borromeo; Pitang Tiongson; Cristina Caedo; Carrie Bautista; Mellie Ablaza; Chito Madrigal Collantes, FCCP chair; Lulu Tesoro Castañeda, FCCP president; Nene Leonor; Minerva Tanseco; Helen Ong; and Mars Lambino

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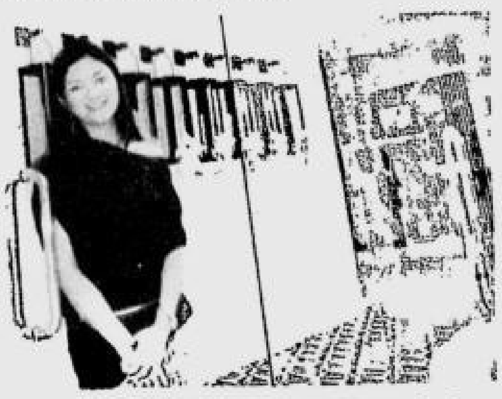

THE SPA marketing manager Aimee Aquino

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New Year pampering at the mall

STRAIGHT volume hair extension by Hairshaft

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2. Welcome wellness. Take a peaceful, tranquil break at The Spa, also located at the fifth level of The Podium. It offers different massage therapies like the Swedish Massage, Japanese-style Shiatsu Massage, Deep Tissue Massage, and Aromatherapy Massage.

3. Get a haute couture facial! The New Year is also a good time to focus on skincare, and you can do so in style at Darphin at The Podium's lower ground level. It offers painless facial treatments resulting in brighter, smoother and more relaxed skin.

4. Try a waterless manicure and I-Warm treatment! Give your hands and feet a treat at the Lotus Hand and Foot Spa at The Podium's lower ground floor. The I-Warm signature manicure treatment is a mixture of warm lotions and moisturizers that are smoothened through the cuticles, hands and even arms.

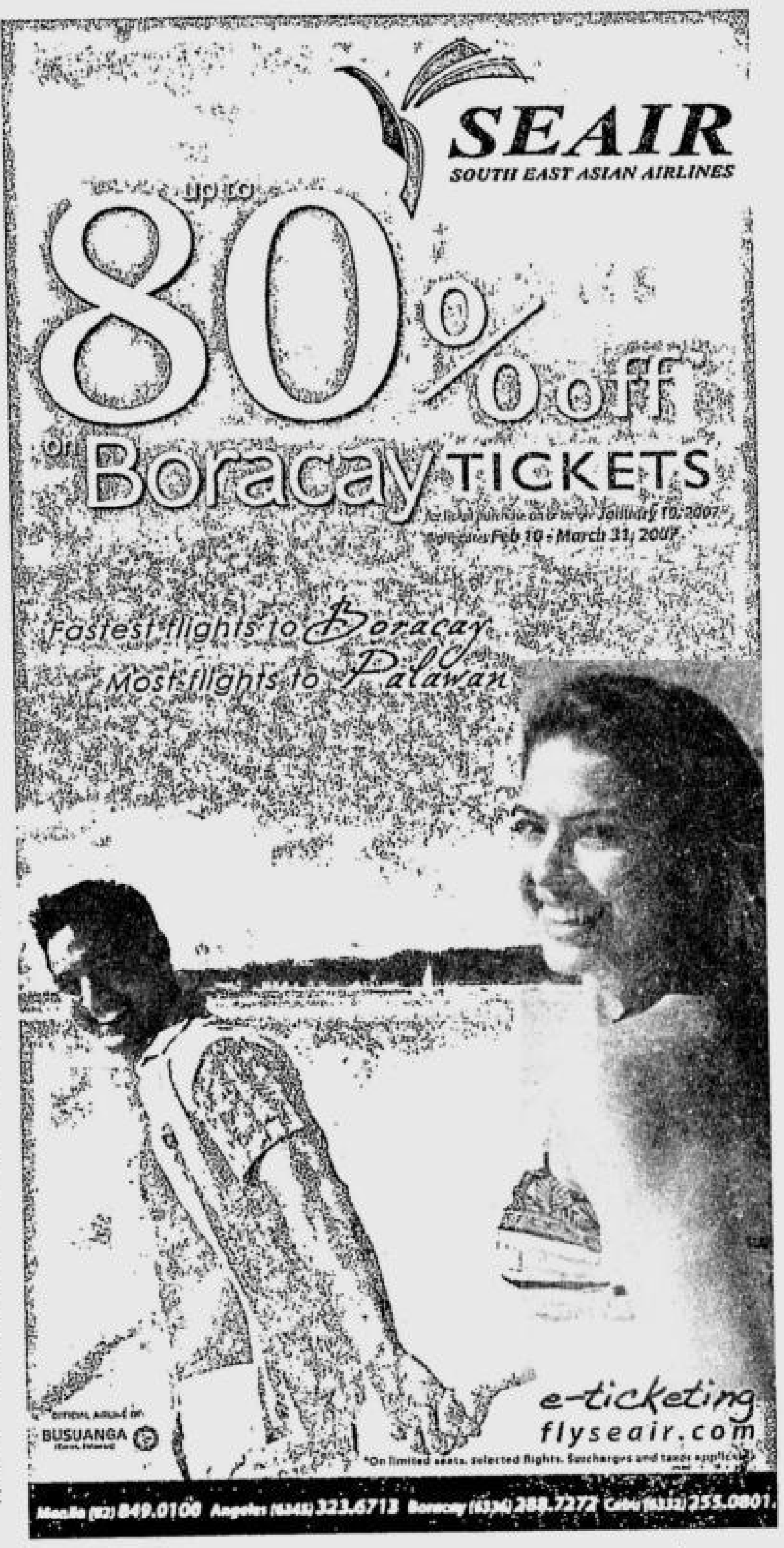
5. Try beauty the Belo way. The Belo Medical Group is at the forefront of an industry serving the highly specialized market of comprehensive beauty enhancement with the use of ultra-modern methodology.

Located at the lower ground level of The Podium, the outlet offers facials, peels, lifts, augmentation, and other cutting-edge treatments.

6. Make grooming fun for kids. The new Kids Hairsalon at The Podium's lower ground level makes looking good fun for kids. Some of the seats are made of hydraulic toy cars. Kids can also watch their favorite movies while getting a haircut.

The salon, which caters to kids 5 months-15 years old, offers a free haircut and toys to kids after their 12th haircut. It also offers first haircut certificates for babies.

KIDS Hairsalon at the lower ground floor of The Podium



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Cost-cutting beauty maintenance plan

MAKEOVER 911

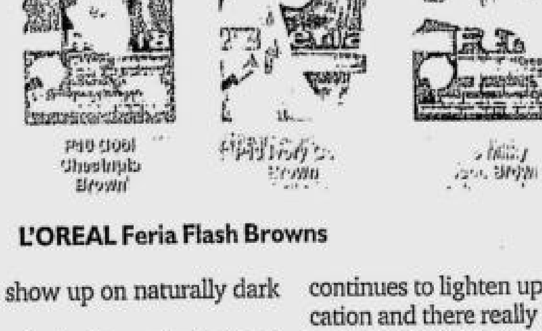
Kinny Salas

FOR THE ENTIRE MONTH OF JANUARY, I am tackling weight loss and cost-cutting. Those are always my concerns after the holiday excess. Everyone will be clearing out credit card debt and earning back the lost cash from the incurred expenses.

One area I have neglected is my hair. Despite constant reminders from my stylists, I literally had no time to block out a good five hours that cover the back-and-forth trip to the salon, highlights and color, treatments, a cut and style. The moment November hit, it was all a blur of activities, preparation and meeting deadlines at work.

While getting ready for Christmas, I noticed my roots were visible by almost two inches. But my haircut still looked great, thanks to Manfred Spiering's (of Basement Salon Rockwell) meticulous styling last October so that was nothing to worry about.

I rummaged through my Christmas loot from L'Oreal and found the three Feria Flash Brown Hair colors in P10 Cool Chestnut Brown (mostly neutral with both red and gold tones), P13 Ivory Gold Brown (mostly gold tones) and P15 Milky Cocoa Brown (stronger reddish tones).



L'OREAL Feria Flash Browns

What makes Feria different from most DIY permanent hair color is that it is designed to show up on naturally dark Asian hair.

Other brands are made for Caucasian hair and oftentimes their model on the box is actually a blond who has light hair, that's why it registers on the box a particular color. Once I, with my dark Asian hair, apply the other brands, they barely register on my hair if at all. Eventually, I would just buy a shade that is a lot lighter like honey blonde to get the perfect shade of brown I wanted.

This was very risky though because you cannot predict the outcome and a lot of times I ended up with hair that was too brassy and cheap-looking.

Feria Flash Browns include a brown color booster in the mix so one would not need to bleach the hair beforehand to get the color on the model.

Note that everyone's hair is different so results may be lighter or darker than what you see on the model or your friend. For matching my previous color with my roots, it was a toss-up between P10 Cool Chestnut Brown and P13 Ivory Gold Brown, based on the color swatch on the side of the box. I decided to go for the slightly darker P10 to play it safe as too light roots may resemble white hair.

Upon writing this article my hair was rinsed and dried. Since the rest of my hair was already previously colored, I concentrated application on my darker roots and left it on for 20 minutes, then applied leftover color to the rest of my hair and left it for another 10 minutes before rinsing. The result was darker than the model on the box, but there was a definite color change which was obviously lighter than my roots.

Based on my experience, color continues to lighten up to two weeks after application and there really is a good possibility it will match the color on the model. For now, it is about two shades deeper.

Important: Perform a 48-hour skin test as instructed in the enclosed manual to make sure you will have no allergic reaction. Even if you tested negative to previous hair coloring kits, some people who have lowered immune systems may suddenly develop them. Please read instructions thoroughly.

The Feria Flash Browns are available this month at leading department, grocery and drug stores and costs P525. That's so much cheaper than a professional salon job. It may not yield results as impressive as a salon's, but it will tide you over till you have cleared debts and raised money for your next professional color job around two months from now.

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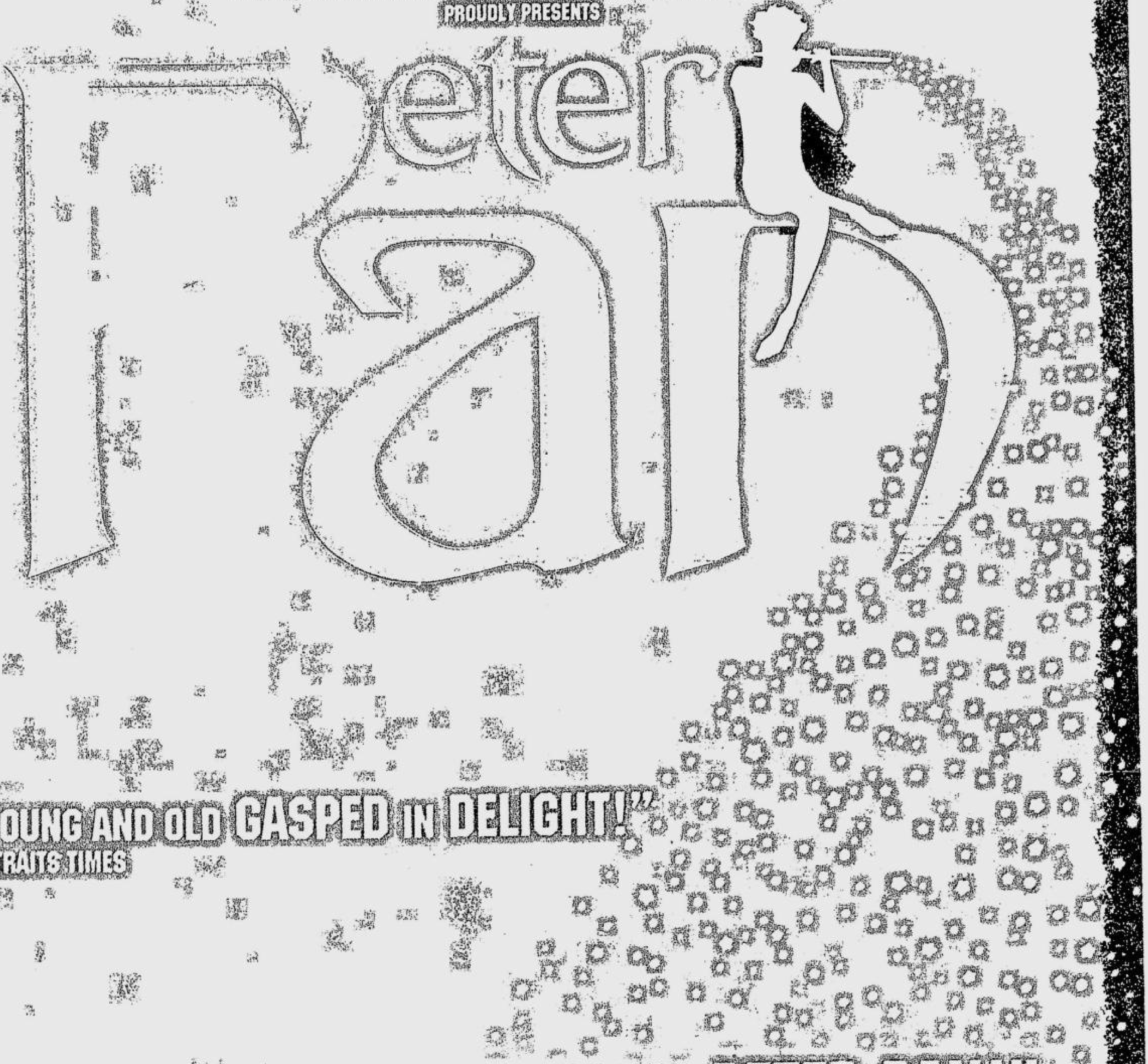

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DID YOU KNOW...

LOS ANGELES—Oscar-winning actress Julia Roberts is expecting her third child with husband Danny Moder, People magazine reported Friday. Roberts, 39, the star of "Pretty Woman" and "Erin Brockovich," is due to give birth next summer, her spokeswoman Marcy Engelman told People magazine. Roberts and Moder have two-year-old twins, Hazel and Finn. *AFP*

JESSICA Hagedorn, author PDI PHOTO

RAMON de Ocampo, cast member PDI PHOTO

Acclaimed 'Dogeaters' to be restaged in LA

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—JESSICA HAGEDORN's "Dogeaters," a fascinating, sprawling portrait of the Philippines in the 1980s, gets a restaging in LA with previews beginning Jan. 14.

Based on Jessica's best-selling novel of the same name, which was nominated for the prestigious National Book Award in 1990, the play will run from Jan. 21 to Feb. 11 at the Center Theatre Group (CTG)/Kirk Douglas Theatre. CTG, one of America's top theater companies that also produces award-winning productions at the Ahmanson Theatre and Mark Taper Forum, mounted the "Flower Drum Song" revival which starred Lea Salonga.

We watched this production first presented by SIPA (Search to Involve Pilipino Americans) and TDRZ Productions, Inc. in 2004 and highly recommend it. Jon Lawrence Rivera, the first Filipino to direct the play and earned an Ovation Award nomination for that 2004 production, directs again.

Short rehearsal period

Reprising their characters in Jessica's simultaneously entertaining and thought-provoking commentary about contemporary Philippines are Gino Aquino, Esperanza Catubig, Fran de Leon, Liza Del Mundo, Dom Magwili, Ed Ramolete, Nick Salamone, Robert Almodovar, Christine Avila, Antoine Reynaldo Diel, Golda Inquito, Kennedy Kabasares, Ivan Davila, Natsuko Ohama, Giovanni Ortega, Elizabeth Pan and Minerva Vier. Also in the cast but not in the 2004 production are Ramon de Ocampo, Alberto Isaac and Orlando Pabotoy.

We asked Ramon, whom we profiled in 2005 when he appeared with Samuel Jackson, Ice Cube, Willem Dafoe and Scott Speedman in "xXx: State of the Union," how rehearsals are going. We interviewed the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama graduate via e-mail this time since he was in the thick of rehearsals, with the cast spending the holidays rehearsing for the first preview night just a week away.

"Every show is different and I'm fascinated with how this one is shaping up," Ramon wrote. "For one, we have a very short rehearsal (about two weeks before previews), which only adds to the energy. It's the first Filipino director of 'Dogeaters' as well, and that's something to be excited about."

It turned out that this actor, who once appeared in an all-male Yale Repertory Theatre version of "The Taming of the Shrew," was not new to "Dogeaters." "Interestingly enough, I've been involved with 'Dogeaters' for a long time," he shared. "Besides loving the novel, I was in the New York Public Theater Workshop of the show as well as the actual production at the Public Theater in New York

ACCLAIMED/ D3

... plus, kidding around with George Clooney

FOUR of 16 survivors: Dex Quindoza, Rich Asuncion, Paulo Avelino and Renee Lascuña NINI VALERA

Kiko, Jean, Chariz & Lui booted out of 'Starstruck'

By Nini Valera

MULTIMEDIA DIRECTOR AND "Starstruck" council member Louie Ignacio gave Jewel Mische, Jesi Corcuera and Dave Valentino a zero for "bad behavior" the past week.

But this did not affect the standing of the three talent search hopefuls during the elimination round last Sunday at Rajah Sulayman Park in Manila.

The three were among the 16 who qualified for this week's challenges.

Fifty percent of the survivors' scores were based on the tally of the council, which also includes actress Lorna Tolentino and talent manager Douglas Quijano. The other 50 percent was from the viewers' text votes (cut-off was midnight of Dec. 30).

"I gave Jewel a zero for being late, Jesi for refusing to wear the clothes chosen for her, and Dave for using his cell phone during workshops," Ignacio told INQUIRER Entertainment after Sunday's show.

"[But] I didn't expect Kiko (Junio of Pampanga) to be voted off," Ignacio said. "He had a perfect score in all areas. Unfortunately, he had the lowest number of text votes."

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Opposites attract—then detract, and almost self-destruct

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

OPPOSITES ATTRACT BUT ALSO detract and almost self-destruct in the lively young-marrieds romp, "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo." The format (rich city boy falls for feisty girl with *probinsiyano* parents) is as old as the movie hills, but writer-director **Joey Reyes** enlivens it with peppy touches—up to a point.

Judy Ann Santos plays the hardworking girl and reel-real beau **Ryan Agoncillo** is her wealthy beloved. Despite some obvious and even glaring differences, they get along pretty well, but their respective sets of parents (hers: **Gina Pareño, Soliman Cruz**; his: **Gloria Diaz, Ariel Ureta**) create all sorts of problems that *almost* cause the breakup of the young marriage, even before Baby arrives.

The film's first half is rollicking, as the developing story establishes its fun parameters. After a while, however, we sense that the performances are generally too loud, comically livid, and over-the-top.

Somebody should remind the cast members that they're acting in a film not a stage comedy or a shrill TV sitcom...

Comedic outburst

For instance, Gina Pareño is often loads of exuberant fun, but here she's too loonily madcap by half, piling one comedic outburst on top of another unselective relentlessness.

For her part, Gloria Diaz plays it cooler, thank goodness, but her acting beats and comedic shifts are too measured and planned to be really infectious.

As for their spouses, Ureta isn't given much opportunity to strut his stuff, while Cruz is a welcome relief from the ladies' combative onslaughts because he plays it natural and focuses on detail and nuance, rather than on a sledgehammer approach.

The movie remains rollicking enough, but another problem soon presents itself: Quite a number of the incidents in the unfolding plot aren't really related to each other, or to an overaching comic theme, but are put in for the moment's humorous interlude, gag or punch line.

After a while, this scattershot approach fuzzes up the movie's focus, and the characters' interrelationships sometimes get screwed up.

Gutsy performance

Happily, Judy Ann survives this episodic approach, by virtue of her gutsy and felt performance, even if she occasionally comes across as **Maricel Soriano**'s ack-ack acolyte.

But the more tyro Ryan eventually suffers from the movie's eclectic approach. His character doesn't graduate from its rich-boy, "confused" stereotype to a fully realized person, and his performance is sharp rather than warm.

It must be said, however, that the lead couple's "real" relationship infuses their "reel" one with a welcome sense of familiarity.

It really helps when on-screen lovers are genuinely comfortable with and fond of each other.

The "*kasalo*" aspect of the movie's title is represented by **Juliana Palermo** as Ryan's "fling" (while his wife is pregnant and unable to accommodate his physical "rights").

In the hands of a sexy and imaginative actress, this role could have been a zingy winner, but Palermo's heavy and even sullen handling underwhelm rather than captivate.

These and other low moments weaken the film's impact on viewers, but it remains a should-see Metro film fest entry, due to its occasionally zingy, warm and telling scenes.

Perhaps, if everybody weren't in such a rush and so over-the-top in intent and outcome, we could have enjoyed more of those winsome and winning moments.

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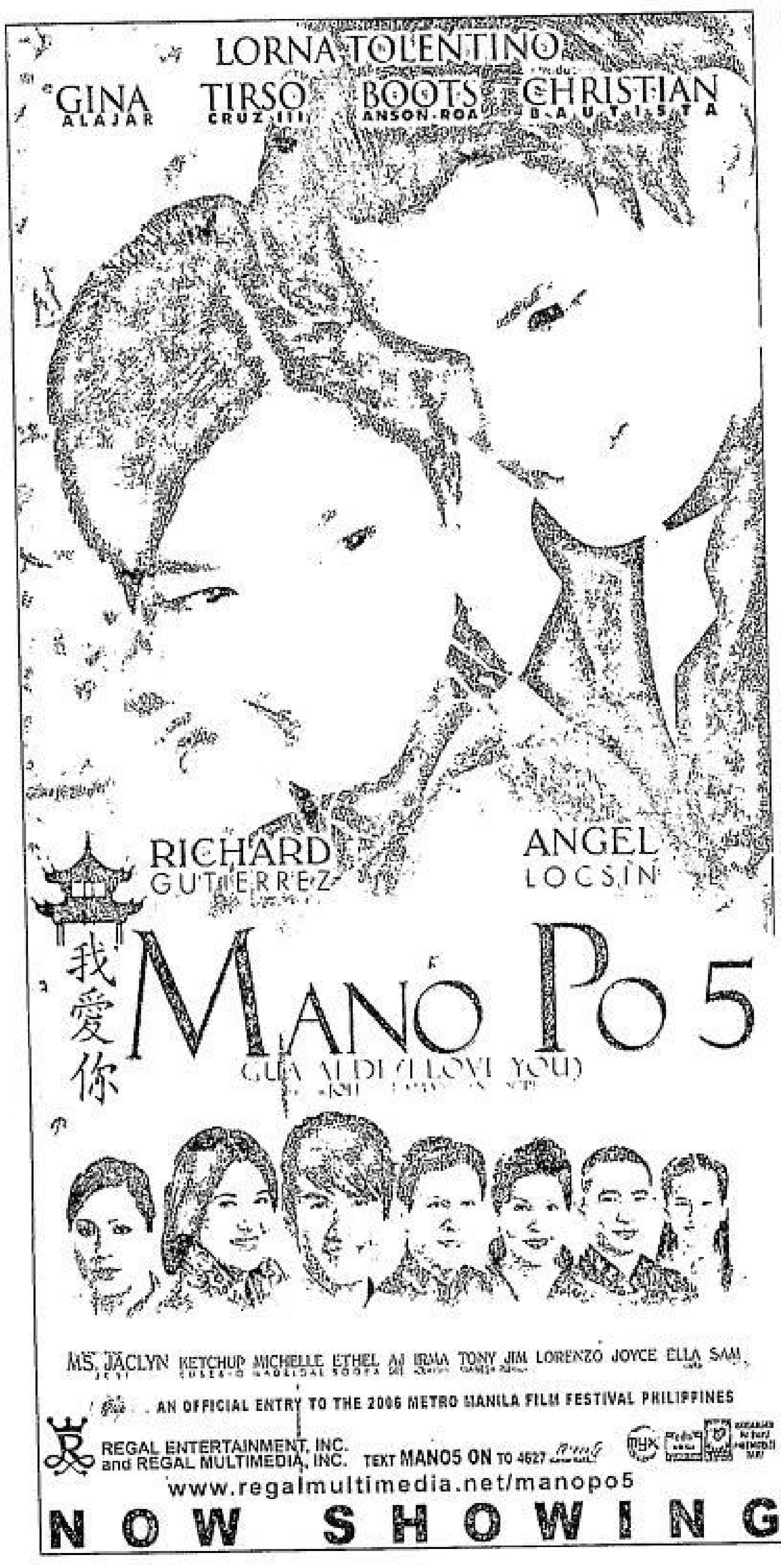
2	MANO PO 5	12:50, 3:20, 5:50, 8:25, 11:00	G
3	ENTENG KABISOTE 3	12:50, 3:15, 5:50, 8:25, 11:00	G
4	SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8	2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00	PG-13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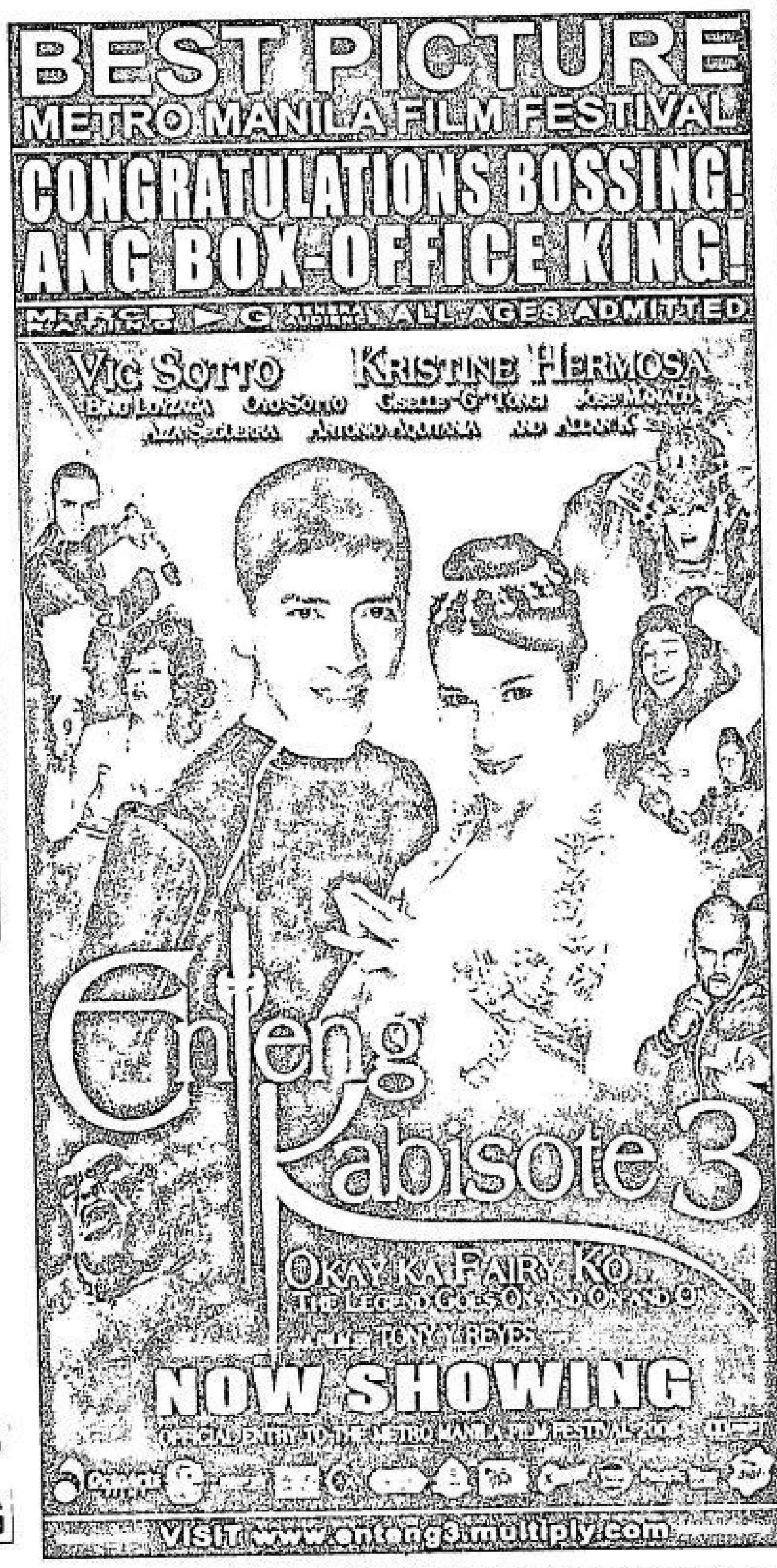
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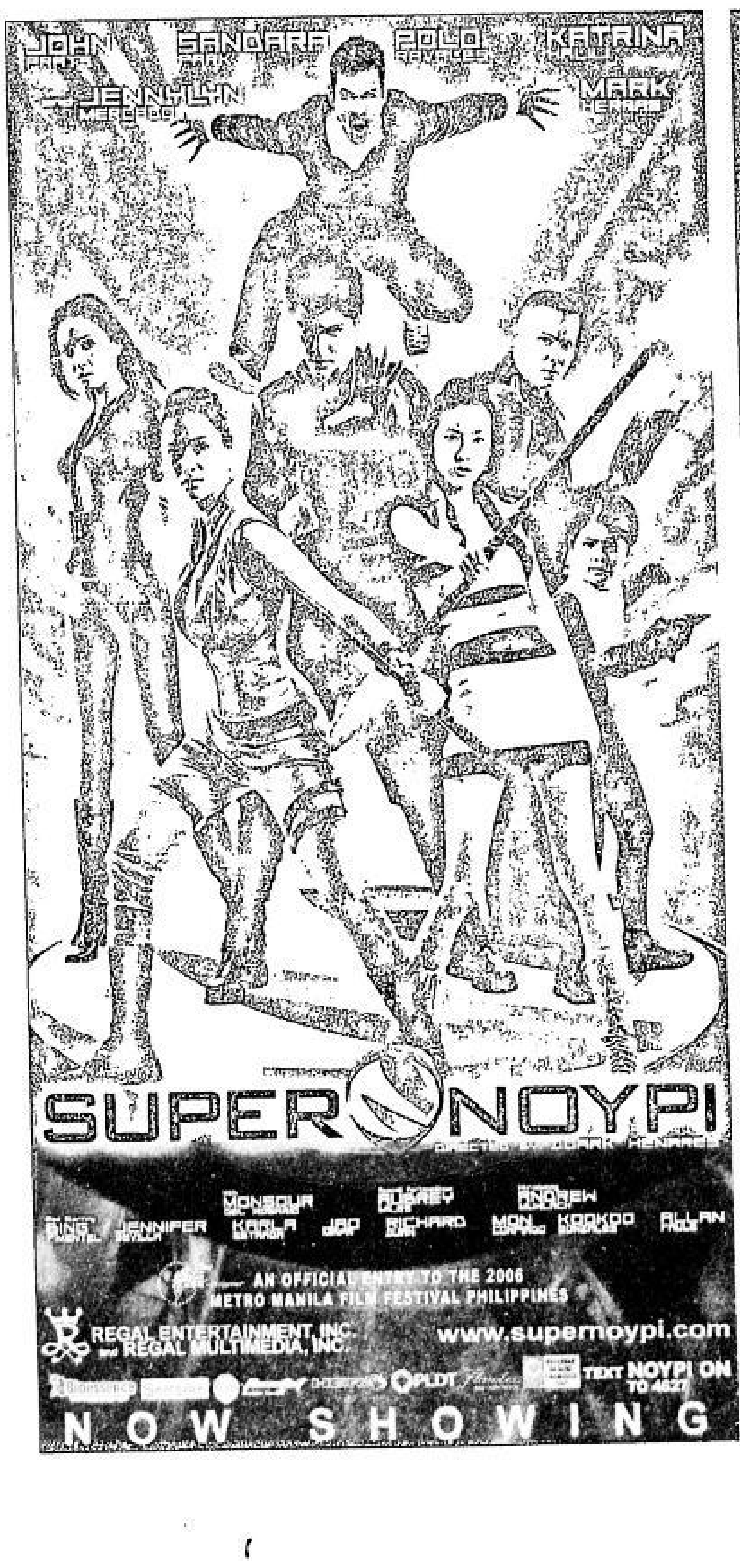
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Acclaimed 'Dogeaters' to be restaged in LA

From page D1

(many years ago). I've done a number of staged readings of the show. I feel like the character of Joey Sands (the young, streetwise hustler and deejay from Tondo, Manila) has been a part of me (insofar as acting is concerned) for years. When this production came up, I was, quite simply, asked to do the role. Luckily for me, the timing was right."

An eye-opener

Since Ramon and his family moved to the US in 1977, I asked him how much of an eye-opener into the Philippine society is "Dogeaters" to him. "I spent a lot of summers in the Philippines after we moved to the States so I'm not at all a stranger to airport shutdowns, coup attempts, curfews, protests, roadblocks, guards and gunshots," he replied. "I was even there during the final days of the changing of the guard from Marcos to Aquino. As a young man at the time, I was present on the streets, in the clubs, and at the Jeepney Coffee shop in the mornings. My father's (Robert de Ocampo) work for the Aquino administration (chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines) as well as for the Ramos administration (Minister of Finance) kept me in a position to witness the political and social collage of the Philippines."

He added, "So I can't say that the play itself was an eye-opener for me (as far as the political and social climate of the Philippines goes), but I think it is an eye-opener to many of those who watch the play. This play is incredibly close to my heart—it's a window to the world and the soul of the Philippines and its children. It's always an honor to be part of the play."

About the play's genius creator, Ramon said: "I consider Jessica both a friend and family. She's a consummate professional, an artist of passion, skill and amazing balance. She is open enough to change things on the fly, even after her plays have been published. In fact, there are quite a few new additions to the book of this play during this incarnation. We've been lucky enough to have her around. Her process is organic, and because of that, she always allows her play to grow. Jessica's pretty amazing, and I always feel lucky to know her and get to speak her words."

"Since 'xXx,' I've done some good guest star appearances," Ramon began when I asked him for an update on his career. "I won a Garland award as part of the ensemble of 'Pera Palas,' a play about Turkey presented at the Boston Court with The Antaeus Company. I had two recurring roles on TV. I spent the better part of the year shuttling back and forth from Canada where I played Harry Oka on a US (and now international) crime show, 'Killer Instinct' for Fox, by 'CSI' producer Josh Berman. At the same time, I was on the final season of 'The West Wing' (season 7 was recently released on DVD) as Jimmy Smits' speech-writer, Otto. Currently, I have a recurring role as Aaron on the NBC show, 'Medium.'"

This personable young man who grew up in Northern Virginia continued, "There are plans in New York to possibly re-mount 'The Romance of Magno Rubio' off Broadway with the Ma-Yi theater company in May. I'd be part of that cast again in a heartbeat. I can only hope for a good year." Ramon won an OBIE (Off-Broadway Theater Awards) citation for his performance in the 2002 staging of "Magno Rubio" in New York.

Tickets to "Dogeaters" are available at (213) 628-2772, online at centertheatregroup.org, in person at the Ahmanson Theatre in downtown LA or at the play's venue itself, the Kirk Douglas Theatre (9820 Washington Blvd., Culver City) two hours prior to each performance.

Quick with a quip

George Clooney almost always answers questions with a quip or a joke.

The actor-director-writer said that in high school, he was the "kid that made the jokes and it stuck with me. I enjoyed it that way." The man may joke his way through an interview but he has a serious side—he is a political animal who is passionate about certain issues. Like the genocide going in Darfur, Sudan, which he has visited—over 200,000 have been killed and an estimated 2.5 million refugees displaced by the war have, in his words, "almost no aid, no protection, no hope."

After our press con with him, he met with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The 45-year-old briefed Annan about the trips he made to China and Egypt to help find solutions to the Darfur conflict. "All of us can report that the situation is at best grave and about to get much worse," the famous Democrat was quoted by AP as saying. "They (refugees) are all alone, and workers are leaving, are being kicked out on a massive scale, leaving these people their last great task—watching their families die one by one."

The socially committed person is always there, bubbling underneath the wisecracks. He spoke soberly when he was asked questions about Darfur during the interview. But in this column, we focus more on the light side of George.

While some of his famous friends are getting married and having babies, George has stayed single. Many predict that he will be a happy bachelor for the rest of his life, claiming that he is commitment-phobic. Many don't know, though, that he did get married once, in 1989—to Talia Balsam, daughter of actor Martin Balsam. The marriage ended in a divorce in 1992.

George stars with Cate Blanchett and Tobey Maguire in "The Good German," a period drama set in the ruins of post-World War II Berlin. The Oscar and Golden Globe-winning actor portrays a US Army war correspondent who becomes embroiled with a former lover (Cate) who is trying to escape her past. It was shot by director Steven Soderbergh in black and white, using the conventions of filmmaking circa 1940s, complete with an airport scene that's a homage to "Casablanca."

George and Steven were recently in the news after they announced that they will shut down their film company, Section 8, which produced such acclaimed films as "Good Night, and Good Luck" and "Syriana." Of course, George made a joke about it in the press con.

Wearing a navy suit with a white dress shirt, his hair slickly combed, George looked like a matinee idol from Hollywood's golden era. This nephew of the late singer, Rosemary Clooney, never fails to win strangers. We've written about the premiere party of "Syriana" last year at the New York Public Library. While his fellow stars secluded themselves upstairs, he was down there with the rest of the guests on the main floor, managing to meet and chat whoever came up to him. At parties, he'll make you feel like he's really conversing with you.

In "Syriana," you got beaten up. In this movie, you also get beaten up. Any explanation?

Well, it has done me very well. I got beaten up in "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" You guys gave me a Golden Globe. I got beaten up in "Syriana." I got another Golden Globe. I just kept getting the hell beaten out of me (laughter). I like characters who go in leading with their chin and then realize that they're in over their head. Those are always fun characters to me.

No romantic lead roles coming up?

I'll be doing one now. "Leatherheads" is a romantic comedy, the one that I've been writing and working on and I'm going to direct. We are starting that film on the first of the year with Renee Zellweger.

GEORGE Clooney in "The Good German"

Can you talk some more about Renee?

I just love her. She's a dear friend. I sent her the script the day I finished it and I said, 'Are you interested?' She sent it back, saying, 'When do we start?' That's a nice place to be when you can have an actor of that caliber ready to go to work. I'm really excited about that.

Were you romantically involved with Renee at all?

We lived together for nine years (laughter). A lot of people didn't know that. We have several children. We adopted (laughter).

If you can address the notion of romantic love versus real love…

You know, I am the expert on romantic and real love (laughter) and probably the exact person to come to for this question. I'm glad you asked (laughter).

You mean romanticizing the idea of love as opposed to the realities? I think everybody in the world has a very grand idea of what it should be like and then there's the reality of waking up with someone with bad breath. There's a difference but I am certainly not the expert on love although Steven (Soderbergh) and I have been dating for quite some time now (laughter). Did you think that Section 8 broke up because there was a fight between Steven and me?

Yes.

Really? (Laughter). Yeah, you're right. I don't like him. We were telling the truth.

(More on Sunday)

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

FOUR more survivors (from left): Steff Prescott, Prince Stefan, Jewel Mische and Mart Escudero NINI VALERA

Kiko, Jean, Chariz …

From page D1

Next week two more will be eliminated

Also disqualified were Lui Perez, Chariz Solomon and Jean de Castro.

Solomon and De Castro broke down inside the production team's tent; Junio and Perez took to their cell phones.

The two boys later hugged and patted each other on the back. "That's how it is," Perez told Junio.

Junio said he would go back to his home province, and to school. He was in fourth year high when he dropped out after qualifying for "Starstruck."

Solomon refused to say anything. De Castro cried uncontrollably on Stef Prescott's shoulders.

Jennylyn Mercado, "Starstruck's" first ultimate female survivor, said her wish was for this batch of hopefuls to love their work. "They should take it seriously if they want to stay in the business," she said.

"I heard there were plenty of *pasaway* (hard-headed contestants)," said Mark Herras, first ultimate male survivor. "They should drop that attitude."

Among those identified as "pasaway" was Corcuera, a self-confessed lesbian, who has refused to wear skirts and gowns. She was the only female contestant in pants last Sunday.

The next elimination will be held on Sunday, and then the top 14 survivors will be competing for 10 more weeks.

"Starstruck" is in search of "the ultimate" love team. Each winner will receive P1 million and a P2-million management contract with GMA 7.

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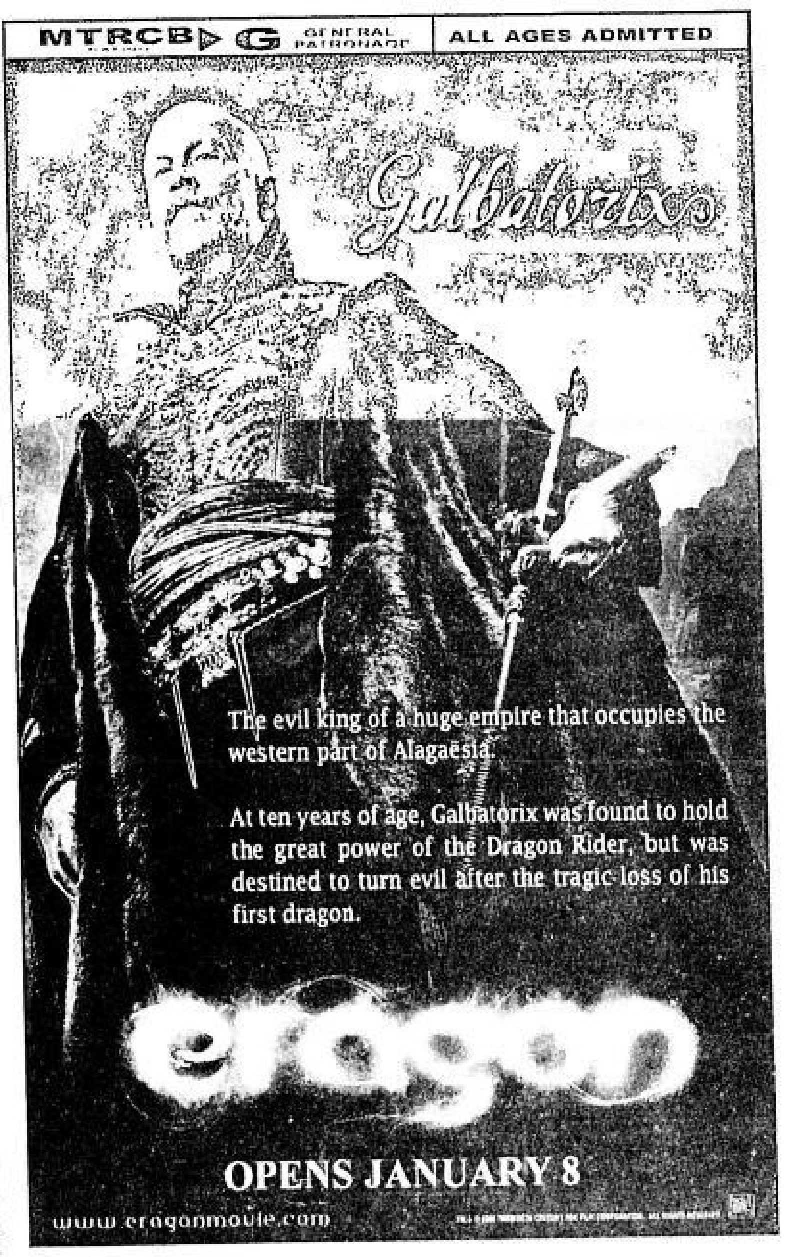

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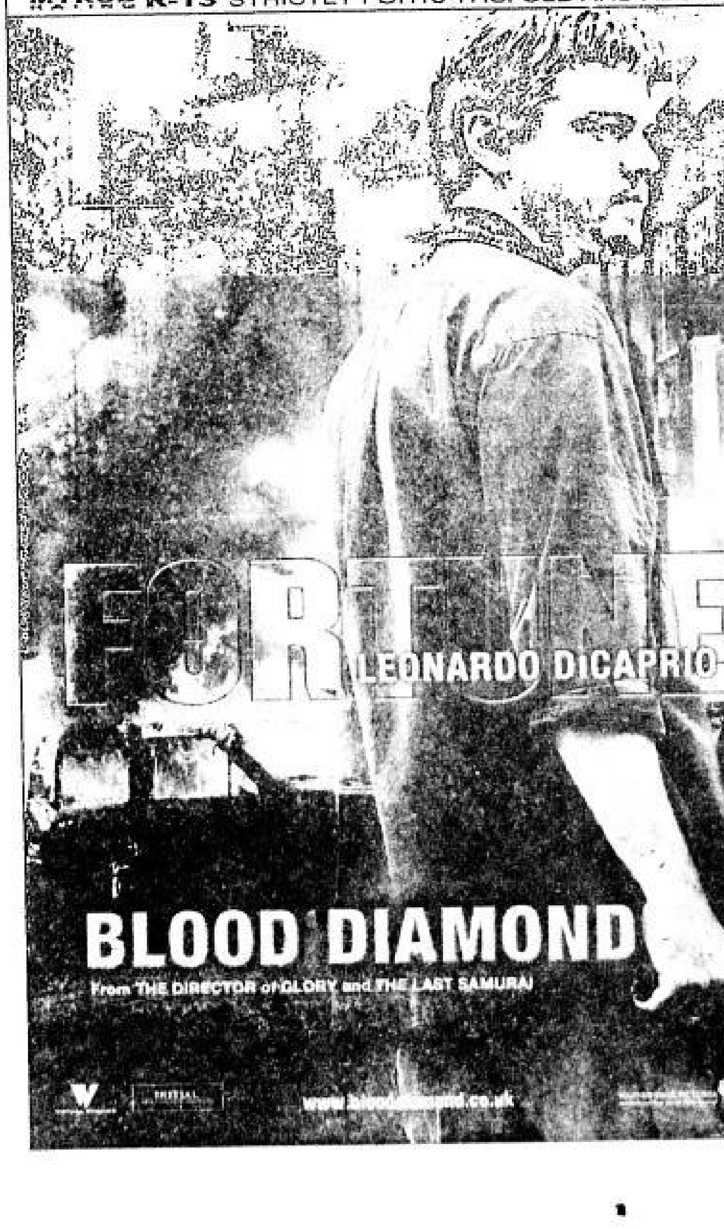
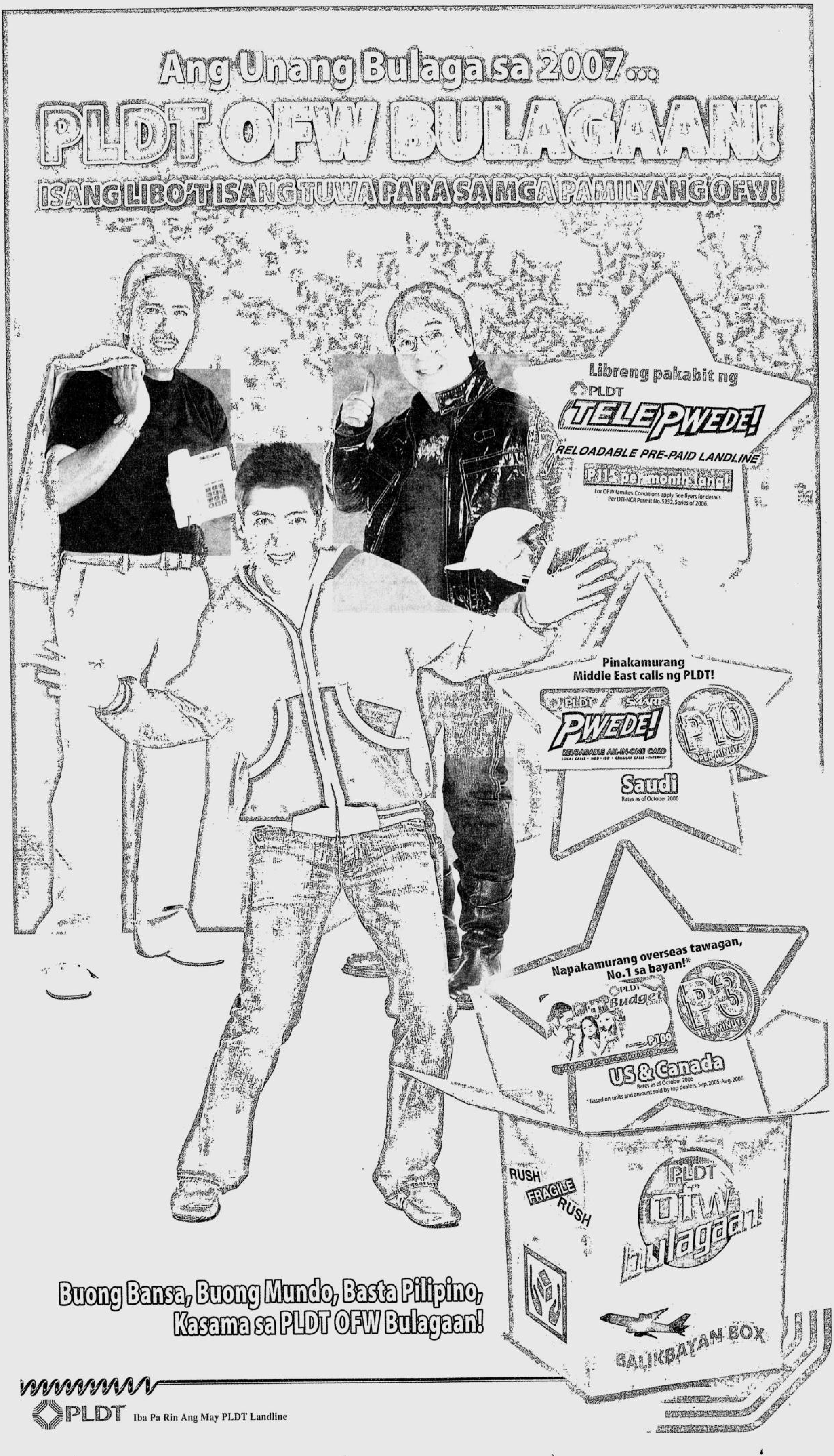


BLOOD DIAMOND
From THE DIRECTOR of GLORY and THE LAST SAMURAI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P10
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P3
PER MINUTE
US & Canada
Rates as of October 2006
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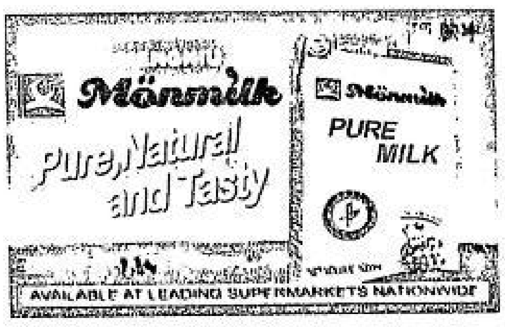
Buong Bansa, Buong Mundo, Basta Pilipino,
Kasama sa PLDT OFW Bulagaan!
PLDT
Iba Pa Rin Ang May PLDT Landline

LIVING Stars

Editor Emmie G. Velarde
sms feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph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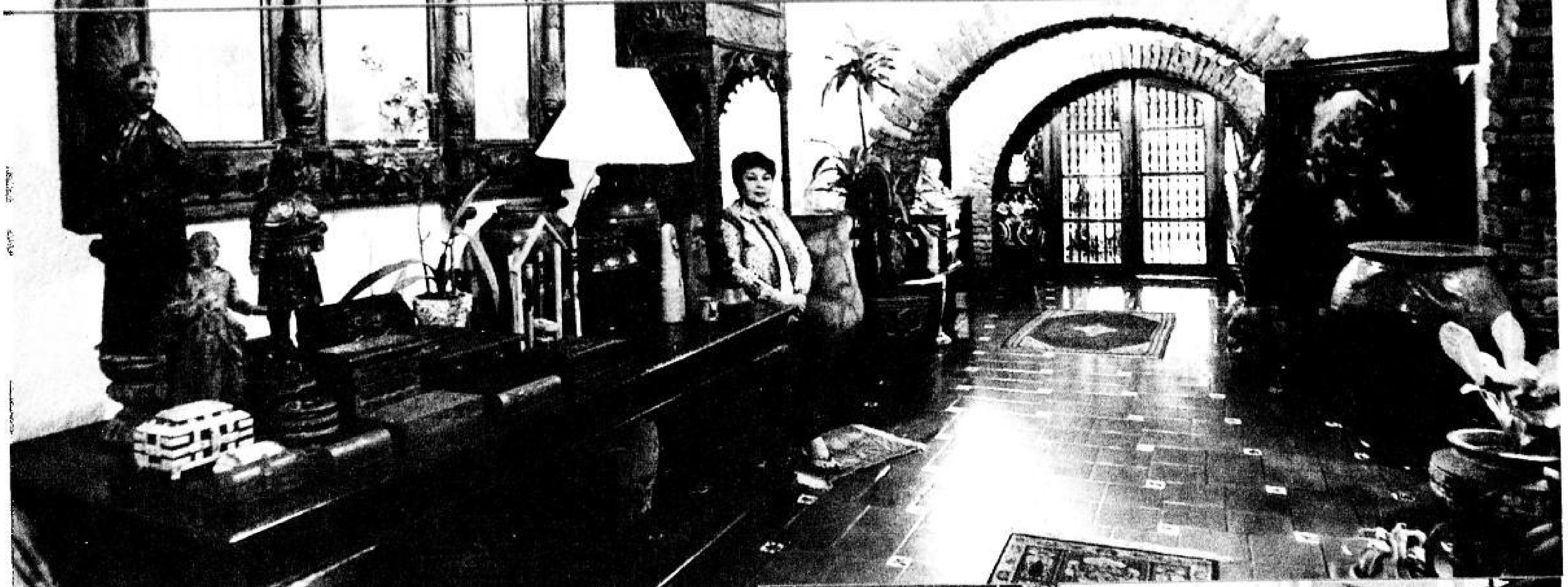
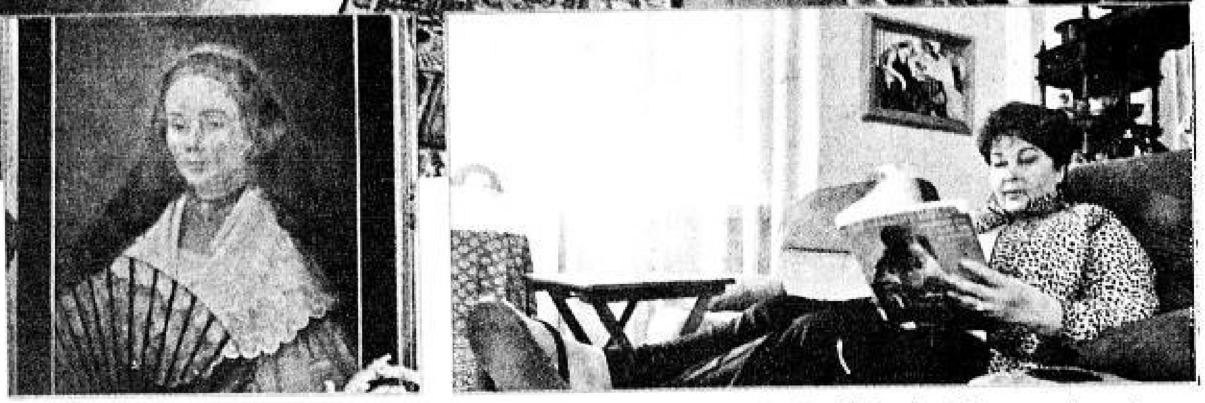




THE "MARIA CLARA" portrait, above left, is by Rafael del Casal; at right, Amalia in the TV room, where she spends lazy afternoons.

Casa de Amalia

The movie queen says of her home: 'It's relaxed and eclectic ... very me'

HER FAVORITE photograph (left) from the late 1970s is prominently displayed in the living room. "Fanny Serrano did my makeup for that shoot," she recalls.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Photos by Edwin Bacasmas

THERE'S A "LIVED-in" feel to her home, Sampaguita movie queen Amalia Fuentes insists.

Perhaps it's because she has been living in the neighborhood since 1959, and in this house since 1969.

It could also be because *that* was precisely her instruction to architect Edgar Ramirez.

"Eclectic," she describes her personal design philosophy. "I didn't want to be tied down to one style. Edgar, better known as a furniture designer, suggested an elegant French look. Very Versailles. I didn't want anything that stiff and formal."

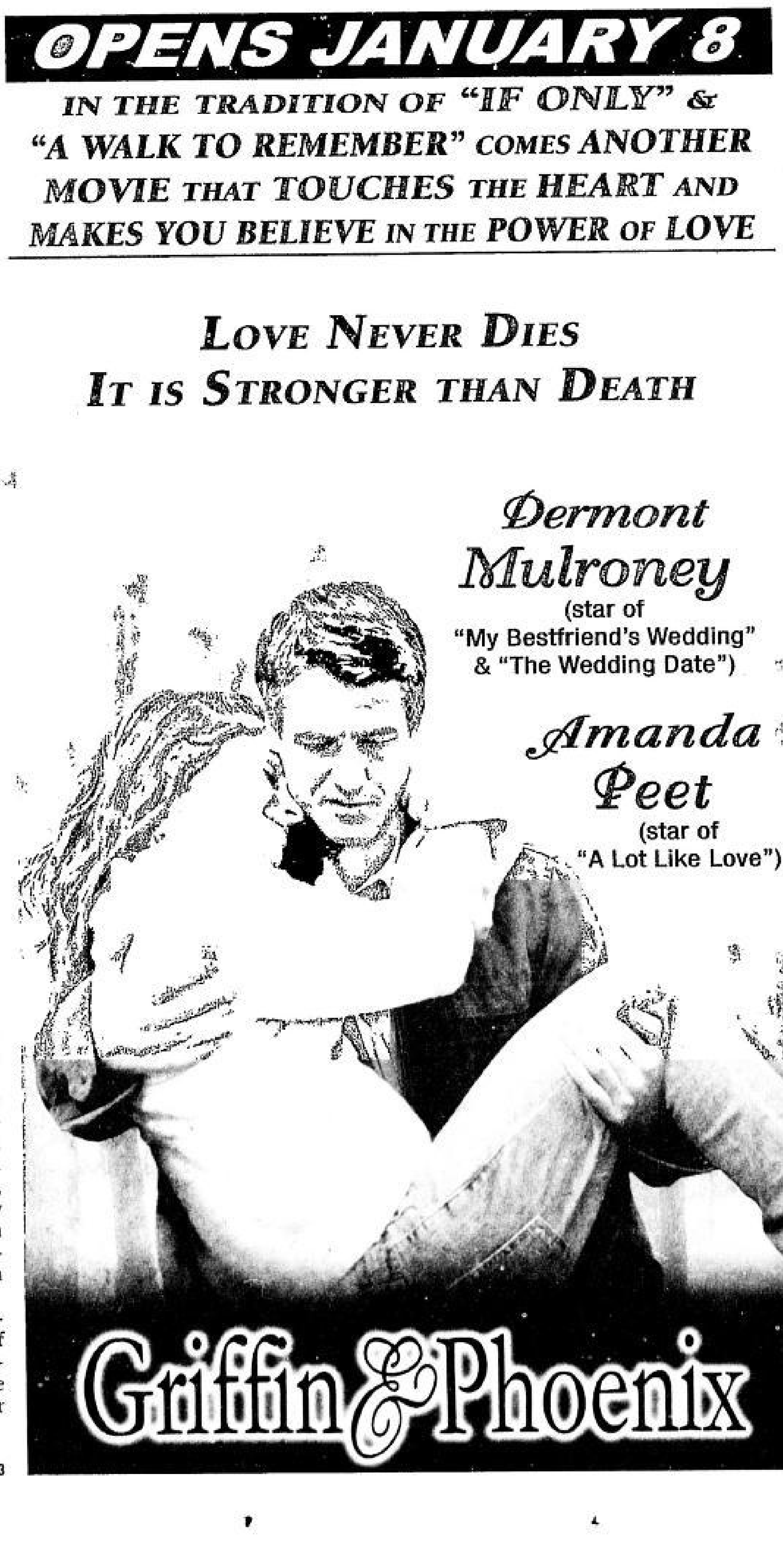
Quite naturally, La Amalia prevailed. "I didn't want a showroom; I wanted a home, where my (six) brothers, guests and I can be at ease. This house is very me ... no pretensions, no hang-ups."

Amalia and Edgar scoured Belgium, France and the Netherlands for the décor.

From Antwerp she brought home a triptych that depicted the Annunciation. From Amsterdam, she got a Nativity painting "done by a student of Rembrandt's in the 17th century."

She has an extensive collection of wooden jewelry boxes and other antique pieces from all over the world.

CASA/E3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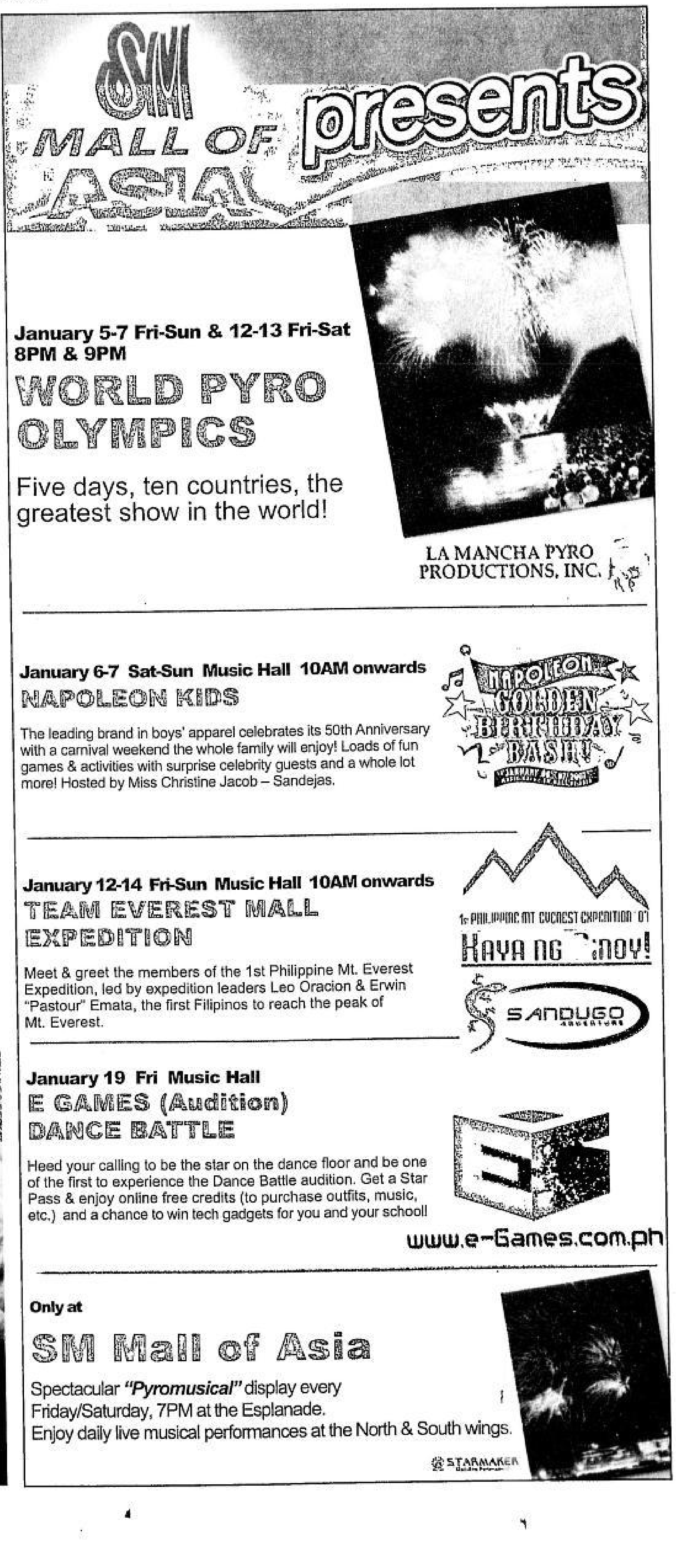
Amanda Peet
(star of "A Lot Like Love")

Griffin & Phoenix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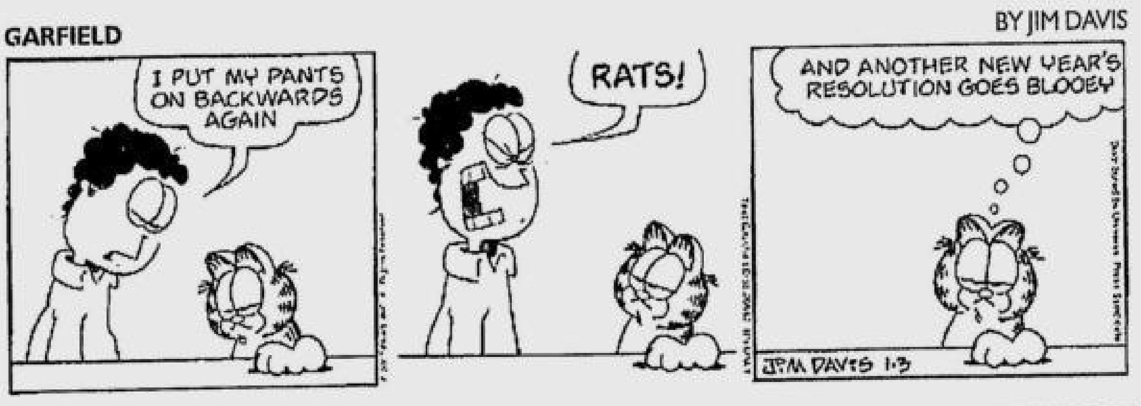
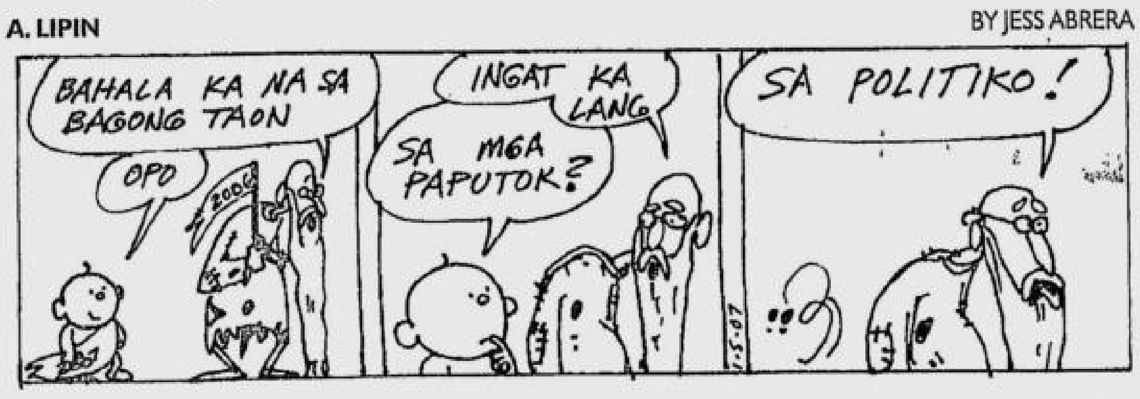
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


I PUT MY PANTS ON BACKWARDS AGAIN
RATS!
AND ANOTHER NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION GOES BLOOEY
JIM DAVIS 1-3

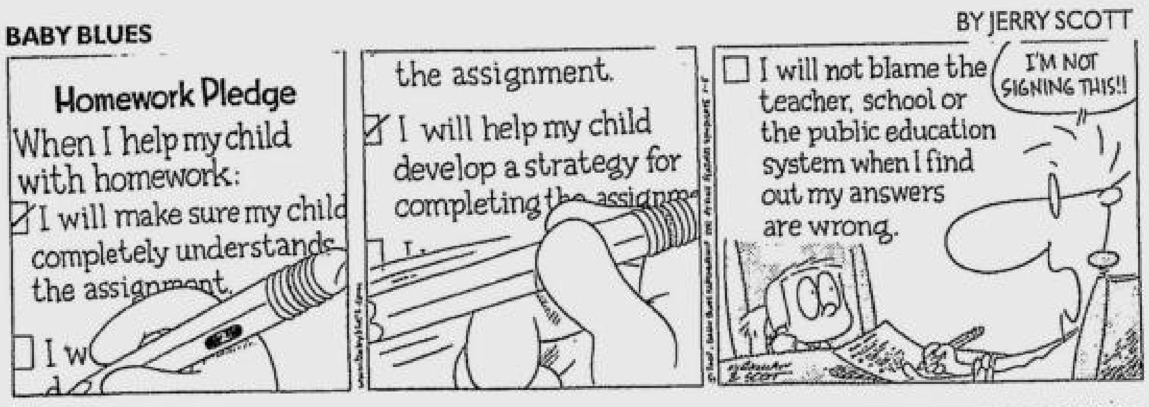
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BAHALA KA NA SA BAGONG TAON
OPO
2006
INGAT KA LANG
SA MGA PAPUTOK?
SA POLITIKO!
1-5-07

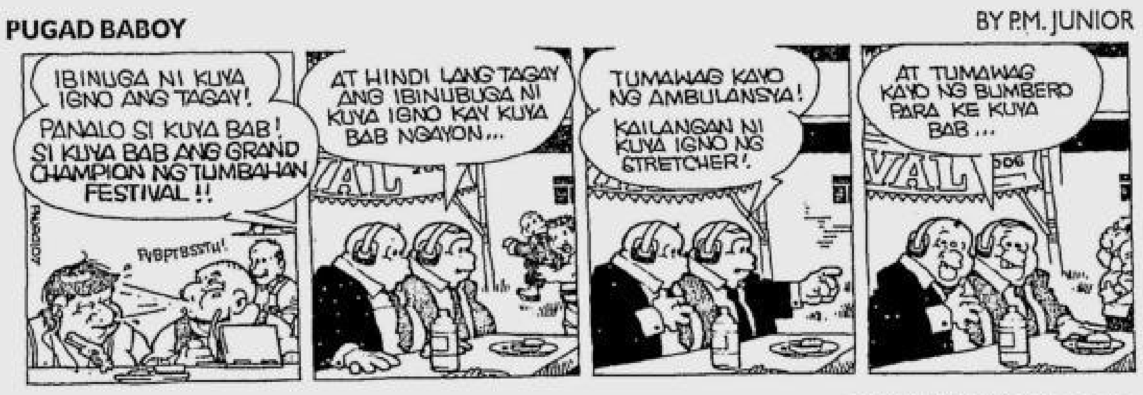
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


Homework Pledge
When I help my child with homework:
☑ I will make sure my child completely understands the assignment.
☐ I w
the assignment.
☑ I will help my child develop a strategy for completing the assignm
☐ I will not blame the teacher, school or the public education system when I find out my answers are wrong.
I'M NOT SIGNING THIS!!

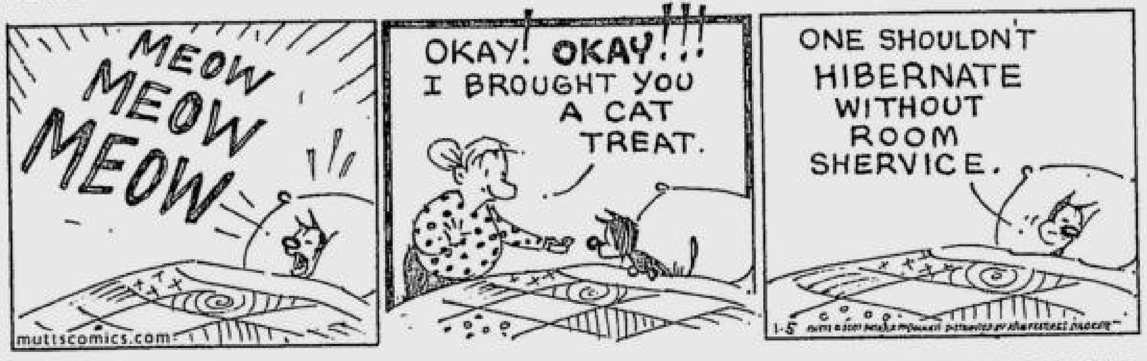
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


IBINUGA NI KUYA IGNO ANG TAGAY!
PANALO SI KUYA BAB! SI KUYA BAB ANG GRAND CHAMPION NG TUMBAHAN FESTIVAL!!
FVBPTBSSTU!
AT HINDI LANG TAGAY ANG IBINUBUGA NI KUYA IGNO KAY KUYA BAB NGAYON...
TUMAWAG KAYO NG AMBULANSYA!
KAILANGAN NI KUYA IGNO NG STRETCHER!
AT TUMAWAG KAYO NG BUMBERO PARA KE KUYA BAB...

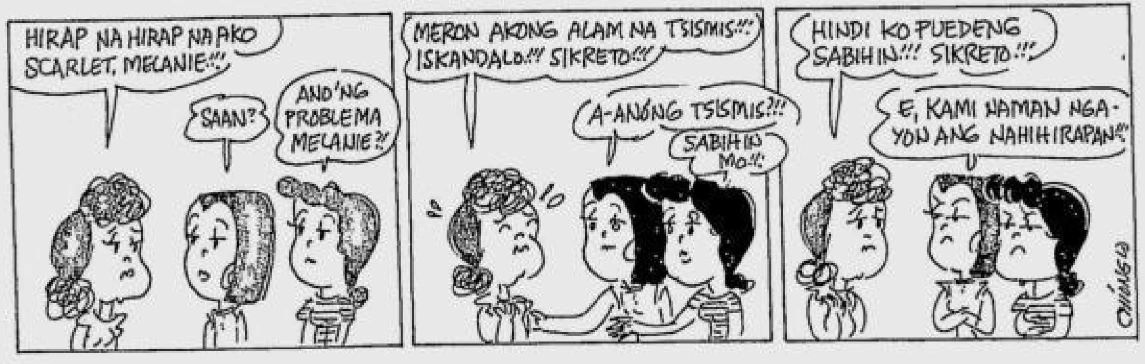
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MEOW MEOW MEOW
OKAY! OKAY!!! I BROUGHT YOU A CAT TREAT.
ONE SHOULDN'T HIBERNATE WITHOUT ROOM SHERVICE.
muttscomics.com
1-5

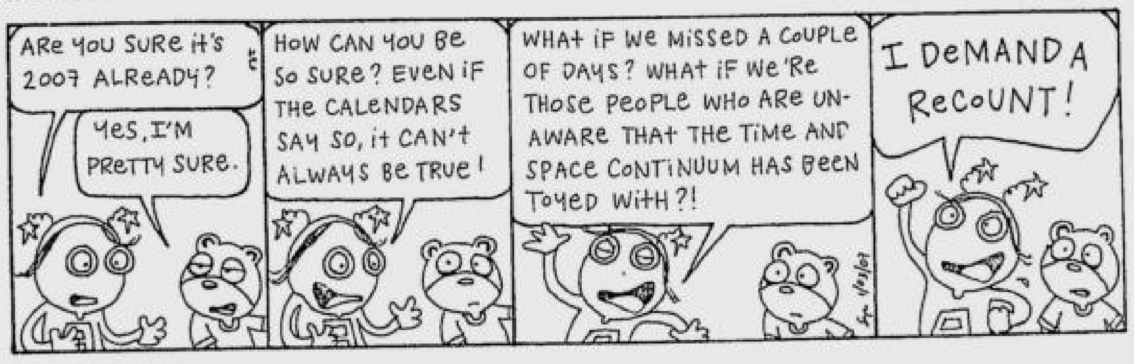
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HIRAP NA HIRAP NA AKO SCARLET, MELANIE!!!
SAAN?
ANO'NG PROBLEMA MELANIE?!
MERON AKONG ALAM NA TSISMIS!!! ISKANDALO!!! SIKRETO!!!
A-ANONG TSISMIS?!!
SABIHIN MO!!
HINDI KO PUEDENG SABIHIN!!! SIKRETO!!!
E, KAMI NAMAN NGAYON ANG NAHIHIRAPAN!!
CHIONGLO

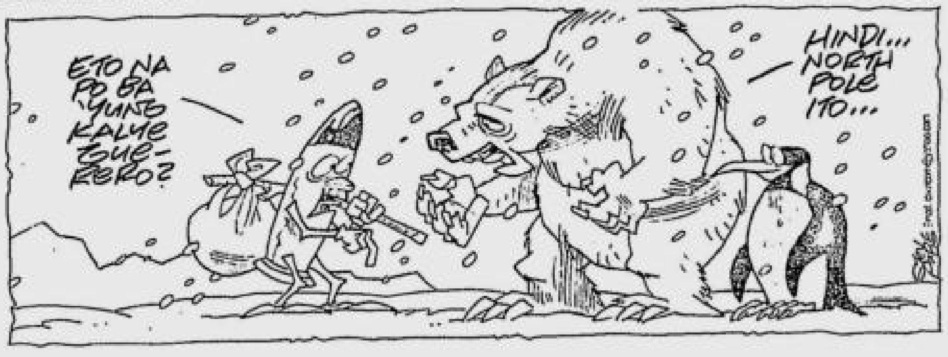
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


ARE YOU SURE IT'S 2007 ALREADY?
YES, I'M PRETTY SURE.
HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE? EVEN IF THE CALENDARS SAY SO, IT CAN'T ALWAYS BE TRUE!
WHAT IF WE MISSED A COUPLE OF DAYS? WHAT IF WE'RE THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE UNAWARE THAT THE TIME AND SPACE CONTINUUM HAS BEEN TOYED WITH?!
I DEMAND A RECOUNT!

DIVINE COMEDY

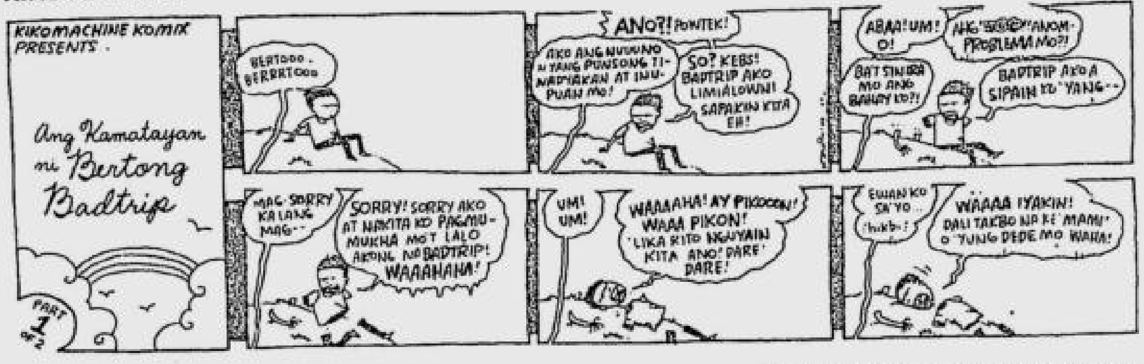
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ETO NA PO BA 'YUNG KALYE GUE-RERO?
HINDI... NORTH POLE ITO...

ANG PATULOY NA PAKIKIPAG-SAPALARAN NG LIGAW NA BALA

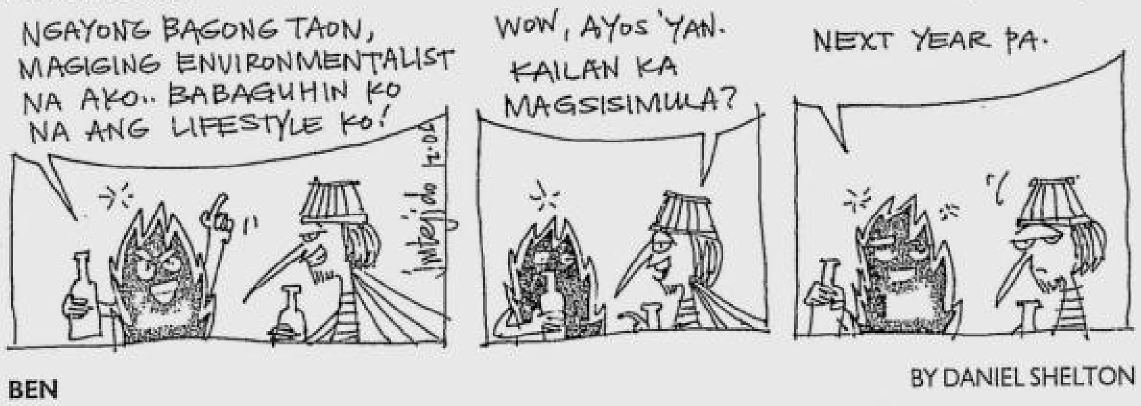
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KIKOMACHINE KOMIX PRESENTS
Ang Kamatayan ni Bertong Badtrip
PART 1 of 2
BERTOOO.. BERRRTOOO
ANO?! PONTEK!
AKO ANG NUNUNO N YANG PUNSONG TINAPAKAN AT INUPUAN MO!
SO? KEBS! BADTRIP AKO LIMIALOWN! SAPAKIN KITA EH!
ABAA! UM! O!
ANG '@#©!' ANONG PROBLEMA MO?!
BAT SINIRA MO ANG BAHAY KO?!
BADTRIP AKO A SIPAIN KO 'YANG--
MAG-SORRY KA LANG MAG--
SORRY! SORRY AKO AT NAKITA KO PAGMUMUKHA MO'T LALO AKONG NABADTRIP! WAAAHAHA!
UM! UM!
WAAAAHA! AY PIKOOON! WAAA PIKON! 'LIKA RITO NGUYAIN KITA ANO! DARE DARE!
EWAN KO SA'YO... (hikbs..!)
WAAAA IYAKIN! DALI TAKBO NA KE MAMI O 'YUNG DEDE MO WAHA!

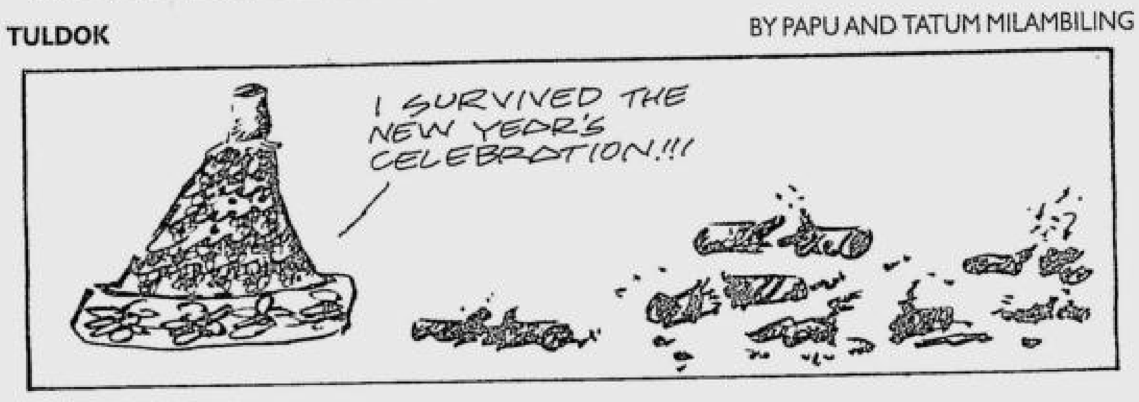
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NGAYONG BAGONG TAON, MAGIGING ENVIRONMENTALIST NA AKO.. BABAGUHIN KO NA ANG LIFESTYLE KO!
WOW, AYOS 'YAN. KAILAN KA MAGSISIMULA?
NEXT YEAR PA.
jmtejido

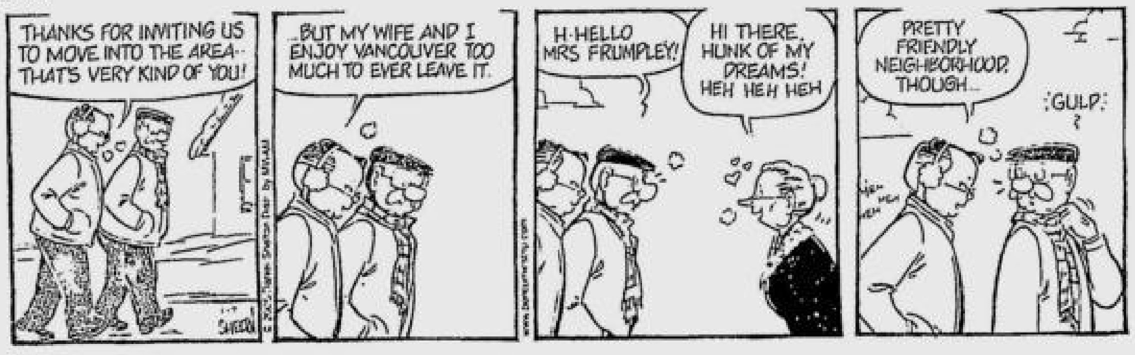
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

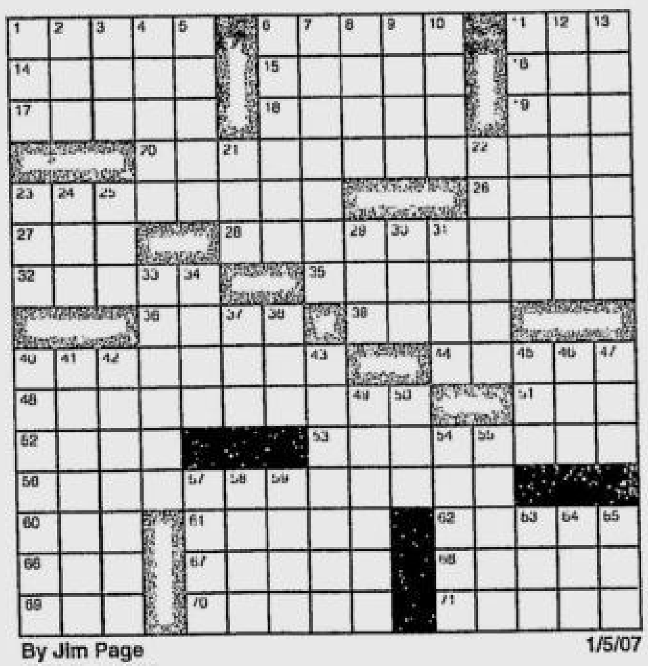

I SURVIVED THE NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THANKS FOR INVITING US TO MOVE INTO THE AREA-- THAT'S VERY KIND OF YOU!
...BUT MY WIFE AND I ENJOY VANCOUVER TOO MUCH TO EVER LEAVE IT.
H-HELLO MRS FRUMPLEY!
HI THERE, HUNK OF MY DREAMS! HEH HEH HEH
PRETTY FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD THOUGH...
GULP

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Jim Page
New York, NY

ACROSS

1 Nudger's joint
6 Jimmy of "N.Y.P.D. Blue"
11 Health resort
14 Disney deer
15 Commission
16 Broadway hotdog?
17 Julie of "Boston Legal"
18 Old-time actress Massey
19 One-time link
20 Emaciated
23 Checker
26 Painter Holbein
27 Hound for payment
28 Long shot
32 Transactions
35 Smokers' receptacles
36 Etc.'s cousin
39 Stiff bristle
40 Organized-crime investigator Estes
44 Fiddlesticks!
48 Pruned
51 Turkish title
52 Mass calendar
53 More lively, as a comeback
56 Vertical stripes and black, fashionwise
60 Drawn Abner
61 Tabriz resident
62 Grade-B Western
66 Here in Le Havre
67 Throat infection
68 Bugle sound
69 British medical syst.
70 Pays attention to
71 Nestle securely

DOWN

1 Backflow
2 Buddhist Thai
3 Autobahn auto
4 Seriously chubby
5 Eye signals
6 Red gem
7 Blackwater fever
8 Privvy to
9 Care for
10 Bacon quantity
11 '50s-revival group
12 Quality of being obvious
13 Accumulates
21 Neutral pronoun
22 John and Maureen
23 Tack on
24 Have regrets
25 Cellular letters
29 Ed.'s work pile
30 Fidel's comrade
31 Internet address starter
33 Apply pressure
34 Shock
37 Forum farewell
38 Went before
40 "80's Ladies" singer
41 German bacteriologist
42 Semper __
43 Prepared a violin bow
45 Yokohama yes
46 Birthday count
47 Armed conflict
49 Opens a fastener
50 __ kwon do
54 Investigation
55 David's song
57 Real looker
58 Art Deco designer
59 Uncommon
63 Can pull
64 Before, once
65 Rainbow band

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

S	U	M	U	P	■	S	O	F	T	■	L	O	R	D
E	N	A	T	E	■	T	H	O	U	■	E	V	E	R
A	T	T	A	R	■	A	M	E	N	■	S	A	M	E
N	O	T	H	I	N	G	■	S	I	E	S	T	A	S
■	■	■	■	G	L	E	E	■	S	L	E	E	P	S
S	U	C	C	E	E	D	S	L	I	K	E	■	■	■
U	S	U	R	E	R	■	C	I	A	■	■	S	O	S
M	A	R	T	S	■	T	H	E	■	M	O	I	R	E
O	F	T	■	■	S	U	E	■	T	A	T	T	E	R
■	■	■	A	P	P	E	A	R	A	N	C	E	O	F
L	A	D	D	I	E	■	T	U	B	A	■	■	■	■
A	L	E	R	T	E	D	■	S	U	C	C	E	S	S
M	I	L	O	■	D	A	B	S	■	L	A	D	L	E
A	N	T	I	■	E	T	U	I	■	E	N	D	U	E
S	E	A	T	■	R	A	T	A	■	S	T	A	R	K

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1/5/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have enormous resilience! You can overcome almost anything. In large measure, this is because you believe you can. You're resourceful, committed and hardworking. Outwardly; you're cheerful and optimistic, but privately, you're quite serious. You have a lovely year to look forward to. It will be friendlier, more social and definitely one that blesses romance and relationships.
Birthdate of: Diane Keaton, actress; Joe Flanigan, actor; Hosea Williams, civil-rights leader.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Accept all invitations from others, because group situations and time spent with friends will be particularly rewarding in the next few weeks. Enjoy this increased popularity.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might be asked to do something artistic related to beauty or design at your work now. Some of you could also develop a crush on your boss.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your hunger for knowledge is increasing. That's why the possibility of travel, taking a course or learning something new really appeals to you now

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Intimate relationships will become sweet and tender in the next few weeks. Other people are inclined to give you things and do favors for you now.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Partnerships and close friendships will become warmer and friendlier now and in the next few weeks. This is a good time to patch up quarrels and get things back on good footing.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Coworkers are unusually supportive of you now. This is the time to introduce any new ideas you have related to your job. People will listen to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Love affairs, romance, parties and all fun occasions are suddenly more promising. Hook up with friends. Make extra time for yourself, just to have fun.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Follow your desire to redecorate or make where you live look more attractive now. Purchases for your home will please you. Family relations are warmer and more loving in the next few weeks.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): If you look around you, you might be surprised to see just how much love there is in your daily world. People do care. Relationships with siblings in particular, are better.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're in the mood to shop for beautiful things for yourself and for loved ones. In the next few weeks, you might also see better ways of boosting your income.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Fair Venus is in your sign. This is an excellent time to shop for wardrobe items, because you like what you see in the mirror.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Solitude in beautiful surroundings pleases you at this time. Nevertheless, time spent with friends and groups is also rewarding. You can have it both ways.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

7	4			1				
5	6							
			8	7		3		
		9	1					
1		4				8		3
					8	6		
		1		4	7			
							2	7
				5			9	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★
1/05

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	3	2	6	1	4	7	5	8
6	7	8	3	5	9	1	4	2
4	1	5	7	2	8	9	6	3
7	8	1	9	6	5	2	3	4
2	9	6	4	8	3	5	1	7
5	4	3	1	7	2	6	8	9
8	6	9	2	4	1	3	7	5
1	2	4	5	3	7	8	9	6
3	5	7	8	9	6	4	2	1

Difficulty Level ★★★

SH[illegible] her daughter Liezl's old bedroom and turned it into the TV room, "a mini-home theater."

WITH good friend Deborah Sun, near the kitchen and informal dining area. "I also have a formal dining room," Amalia says, "but this is where I take my meals every day."

SHE FOUND the Nativity painting in Amsterdam, "done by a student of Rembrandt's in the 17th century."

Casa de Amalia

From page E1

During her most recent trip to Turkey, Greece and Italy, with husband Joey Stevens and daughter Liezl Sumilang, she again bought lots of "interesting pieces," including exotic chandeliers.

"That's what I love about my home. It can look Western, Eastern, Moroccan—truly international!"

Next stop is South America.

Needless to say, Amalia is again gearing up for a decorating expedition, especially since her home is currently being renovated.

She points out: "I am building cabañas by the swimming pool. I'm also planning to put up little pueblos in the garden."

That explains her fascination for Latin America these days.

PARTY! PARTY!

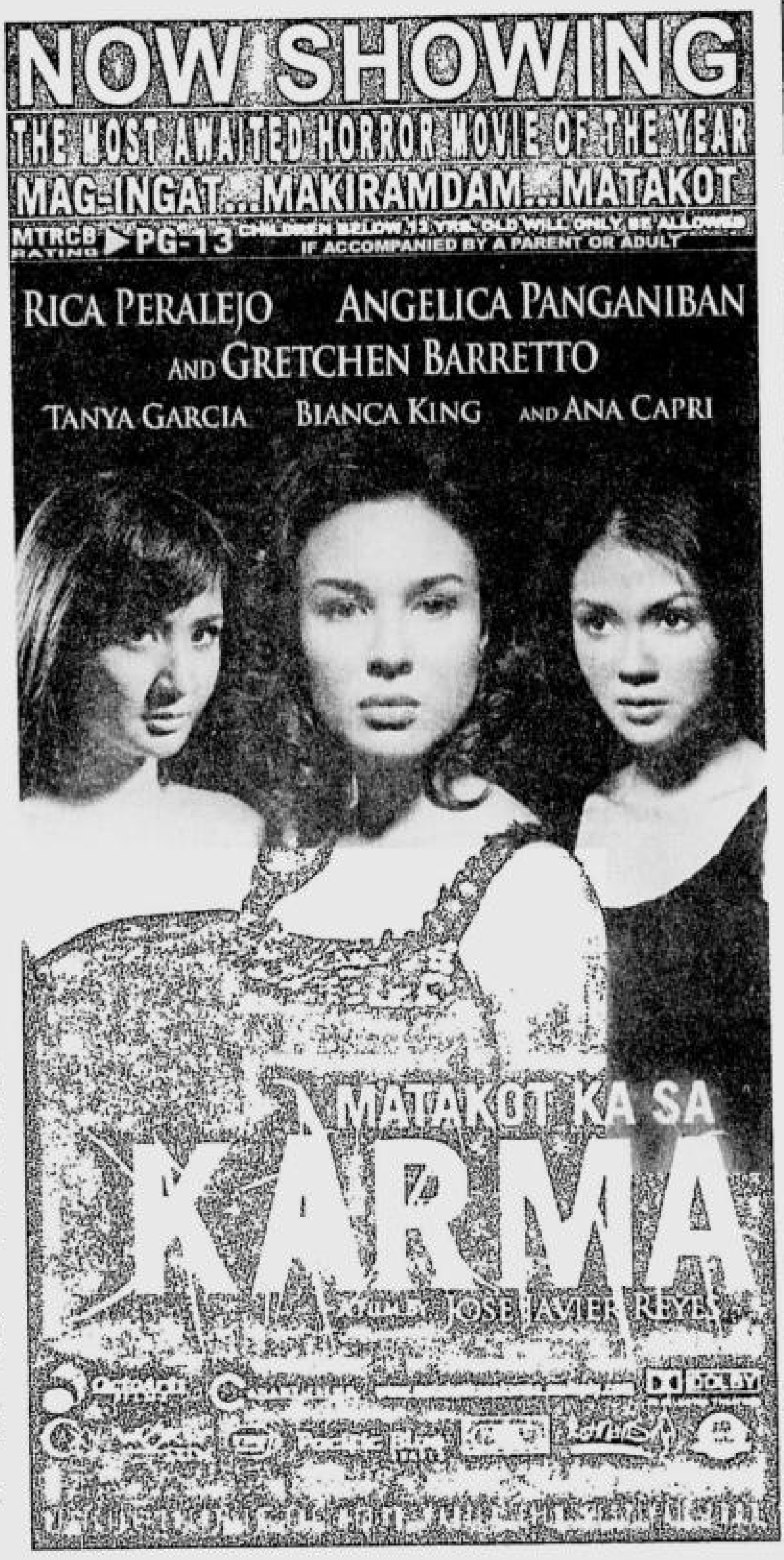
LILY MONTEVERDE and Nanette Medved (escorted by her husband Chris Po), were seen at "Adeste Fidelis," a concert featuring world-renowned Filipino tenor Otoniel Gonzaga, soprano Rachelle Gerodias and the country's other top classical singers, at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park.

PHOTOS BY MANDY NAVASERO

LILY MONTEVERDE

NANETTE MEDVED

CHRIS PO



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TANYA GARCIA BIANCA KING AND ANA CAPRI
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A FILM BY JOSE JAVIER REYES

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KASAL, KASALI, KASALO 11:40 / 1:30 / 2:10 / 4:00 / 4:40 6:30 / 7:10 / 9:00 / 9:40
SUPER NOYPI 11:50 / 2:1[illegible] 4:30 / 6:50 / 9:20
ENTENG KABISOTE 3 12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 7:25 / 9:50
LIGALIG 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:30
ZSA ZSA ZATURNAH 1:40 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:40
SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL 1:25 / 4:10 / 6:55 / 9:40
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
MANO PO 5 11:50 / 2:2[illegible] / 4:50 / 7:20 / 9:50
MATAKOT KA SA KARMA [illegible]:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 7:30 / 9:40
MANO PO 5 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
ALIMALL 5
KASAL, KASALI, KASALO 12:35 / 3:05 / 5:35 / 8:05
ENTENG KABISOTE 3 12:00 R4 / 1:25 / 3:50 / 6:15 / 8:40
SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 12:20 / 3:05 / 5:50 / 8:35
SUPER NOYPI 1:00 / 3:20 / 5:40 / 8:00
LIGALIG 12:40 / 2:30 / 4:20 / 6:10 / 8:00
DOLBY DIGITAL SDDS

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GALLERIA

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3 • THX
2:15 4:40 7:05 9:30

2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
10.45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7.45 10:00

3 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
1:20 4:10 7:00 9 50

4 MANO PO 5
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

6 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
1:00 3:15 5 30 7.45 10:00

7 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

8 SUPER NOYPI
12 00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

9 TATLONG BARAHA
1:20 3:30 5 40 7:50

10 LIGALIG
1 20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

ERMITA

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
12:35 3:00 5:25 7:45 10:00

2 LIGALIG
12:35 2:50 5:05 7:25 9.50

3 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH
12:35 2.50 5:05 7:25 10.00

4 MANO PO 5
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
12:25 2 20 4:15 6:10 8.05 10:00

6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
12 00 2:30 5:0u 7:30 10.00

METRO EAST

1 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH
12:05 2:15 4:25 6 35 9.00

2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
11:25 1 55 4:25 6.55 9:20

3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
11 25 1:50 4:15 6 40 9:05

4 SUPER NOYPI
11 20 1 40 4:00 6 30 9 00

5 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
12.50 2.50 4.50 6.50 9.00

6 MANO PO 5
1:00 3:40 6 20 9:00

7 LIGALIG
12.50 2:50 4:50 6.50 9:00

8 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
10:40 1:20 4:00 6:40 9:10

NOVALICHES

1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
2 SUPER NOYPI
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
4 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
5 MANO PO 5
6 ZSA ZSA ZATURRNAH
7 LIGALIG
8 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2576

1 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER

1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

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1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
2 MANO PO 5
3 SUPER NOYPI
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8

LIPA

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
2 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
3 LIGALIG
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

DASMARINAS

1 SUPER NOYPI
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 MANO PO 5

ANGELES

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
2 MANO PO 5
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8

IMUS

1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
2 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
3 MANO PO 5
4 SUPER NOYPI
5 LIGALIG
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

STARMILLS

1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
3 SUPER NOYPI
4 MANO PO 5
5 LIGALIG
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

BACOLOD

1 MANO PO 5
2 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8
3 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
5 LIGALIG
6 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH

ILOILO

1 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 MANO PO 5
4 SUPER NOYPI
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 3
6 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 8

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'Kubrador' goes to Dubai

THE "KUBRADOR" troupe, composed of filmmaker Jeffrey Jeturian, producer Joji Alonso and actress Gina Pareño, had a blast at the third Dubai International Film Festival, held in the United Arab Emirates from Dec. 10 to 17.

GINA Pareño relaxes at the Madinat Jumeirah complex.

ABOUT to take a boat ride around the man-made river

In between the acclaimed film's three screenings, the Pinoy contingent toured the Madinat Jumeirah complex—which has five-star hotels, posh malls, first-rate theaters, and a man-made river around which boats ferry visitors, as if they were in Venice.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GINA PAREÑO

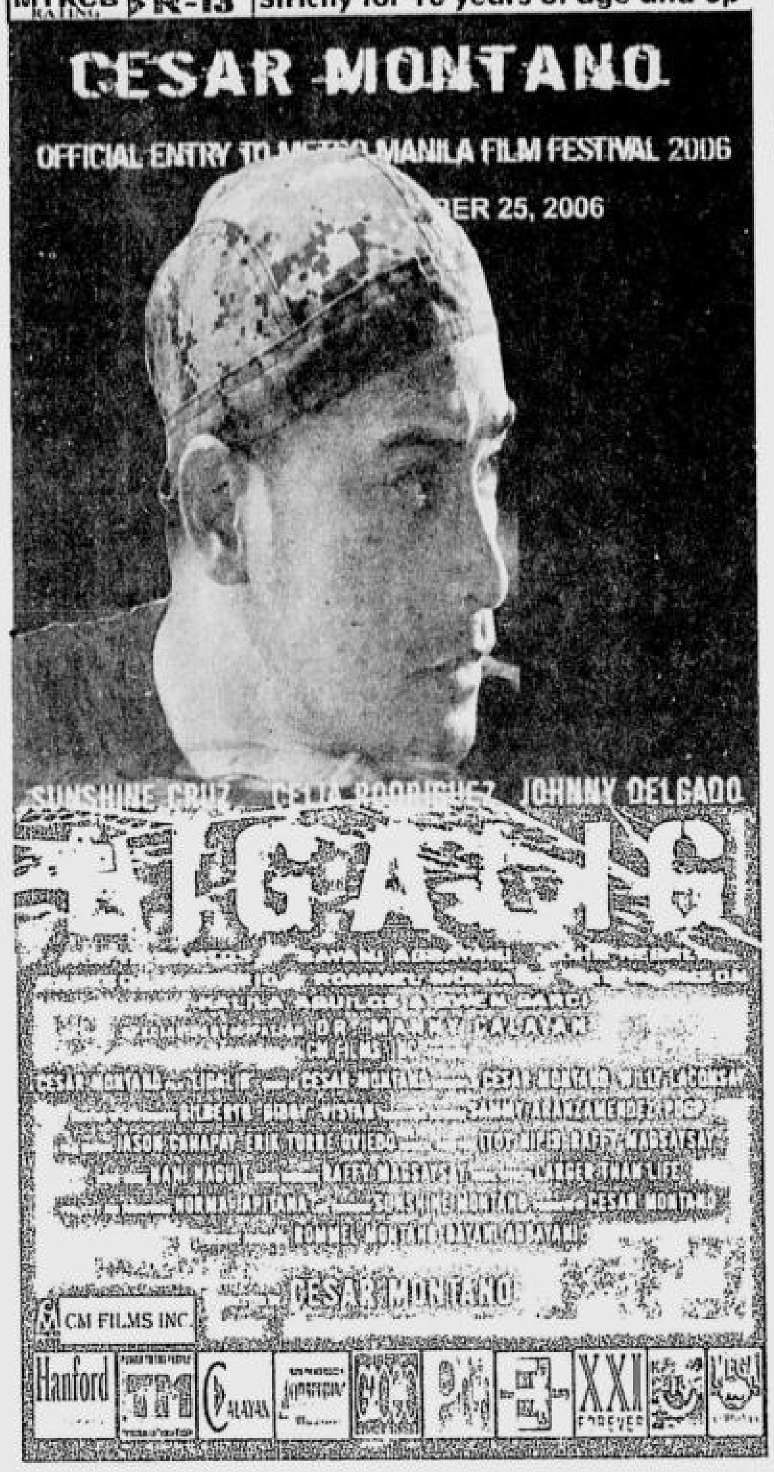
WAITING to be served in an expensive restaurant

THE GOLD stallion fountain at the entrance of the Al Qasr hotel, where the RP group was billeted.

GINA and "Kubrador" director Jeffrey Jeturian enjoy the sights and sounds together.

Rated "A" by Cinema Evaluation Board

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 Strictly for 13 years of age and up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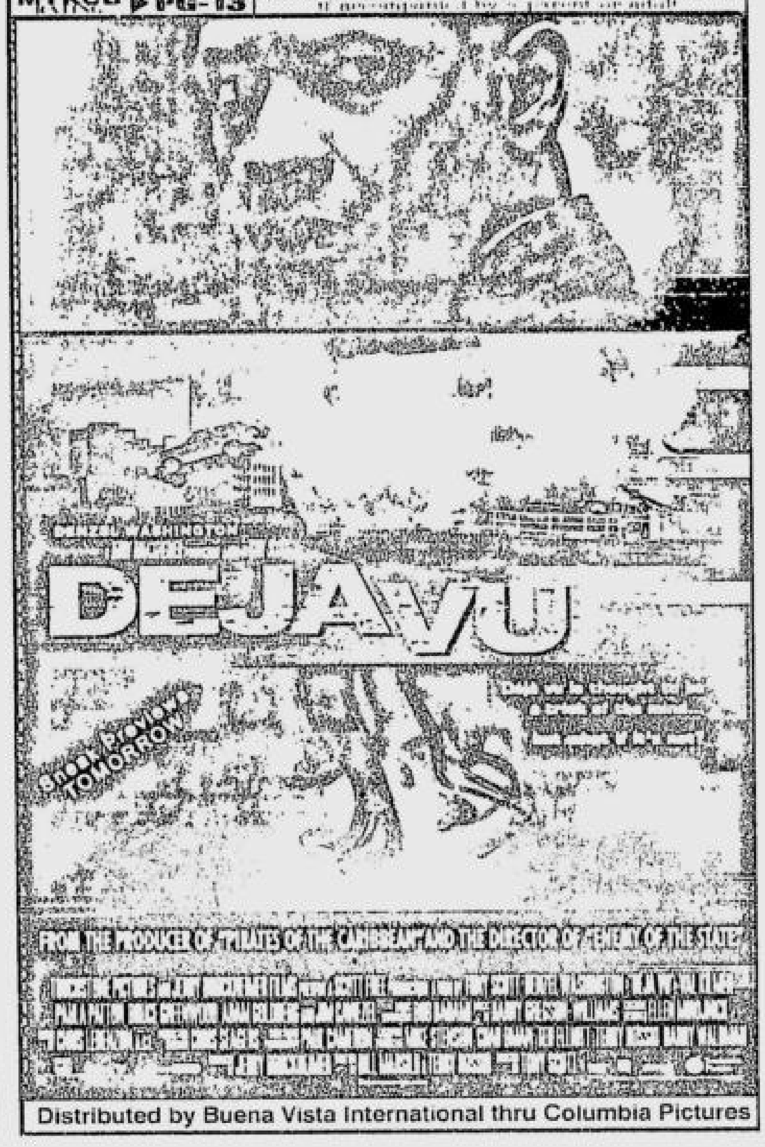
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G1	1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3	3 MANO PO 5	4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
G4	1 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA	2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8	3 THX KASAL, KASALI, KASALO GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH	5 SUPER NOYPI	6 ENTENG KABISOTE 3	7 MANO PO 5
GB1	1 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 3		
GB3	1 THX ENTENG KABISOTE 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX KASAL, KASALI, KASALO GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH GUARANTEED SEATS	4 MATAKOT SA KARMA GUARANTEED SEATS	5 MANO PO 5 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC	1 THX ENTENG KABISOTE 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO		
	3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8	4 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA	5 MANO PO 5	
ACC	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3	2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8	3 MANO PO 5	4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
M2	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 3	2 ZSA ZSA ZATURNNAH		
	3 MANO PO 5	4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO	5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8	

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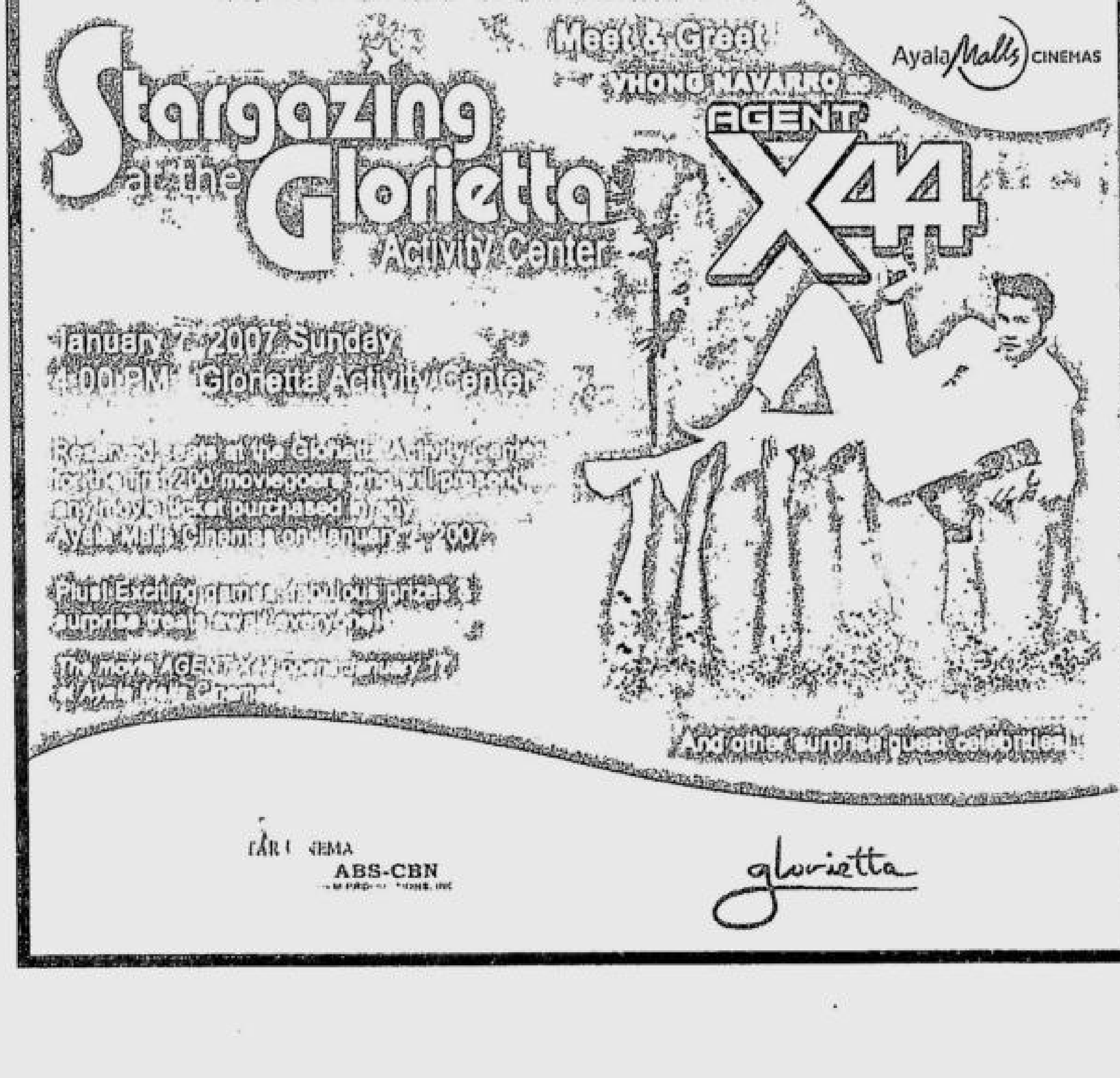
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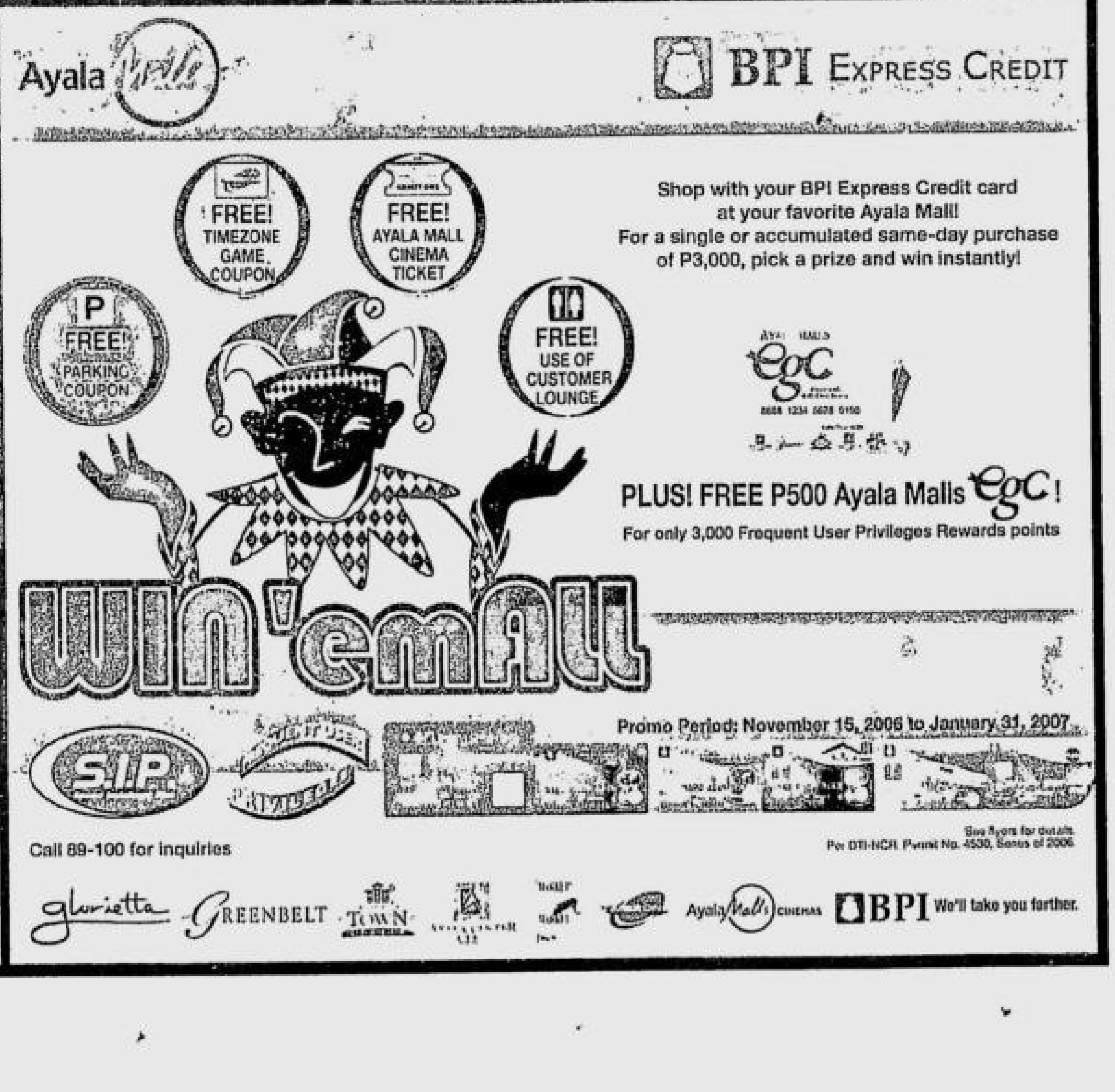
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